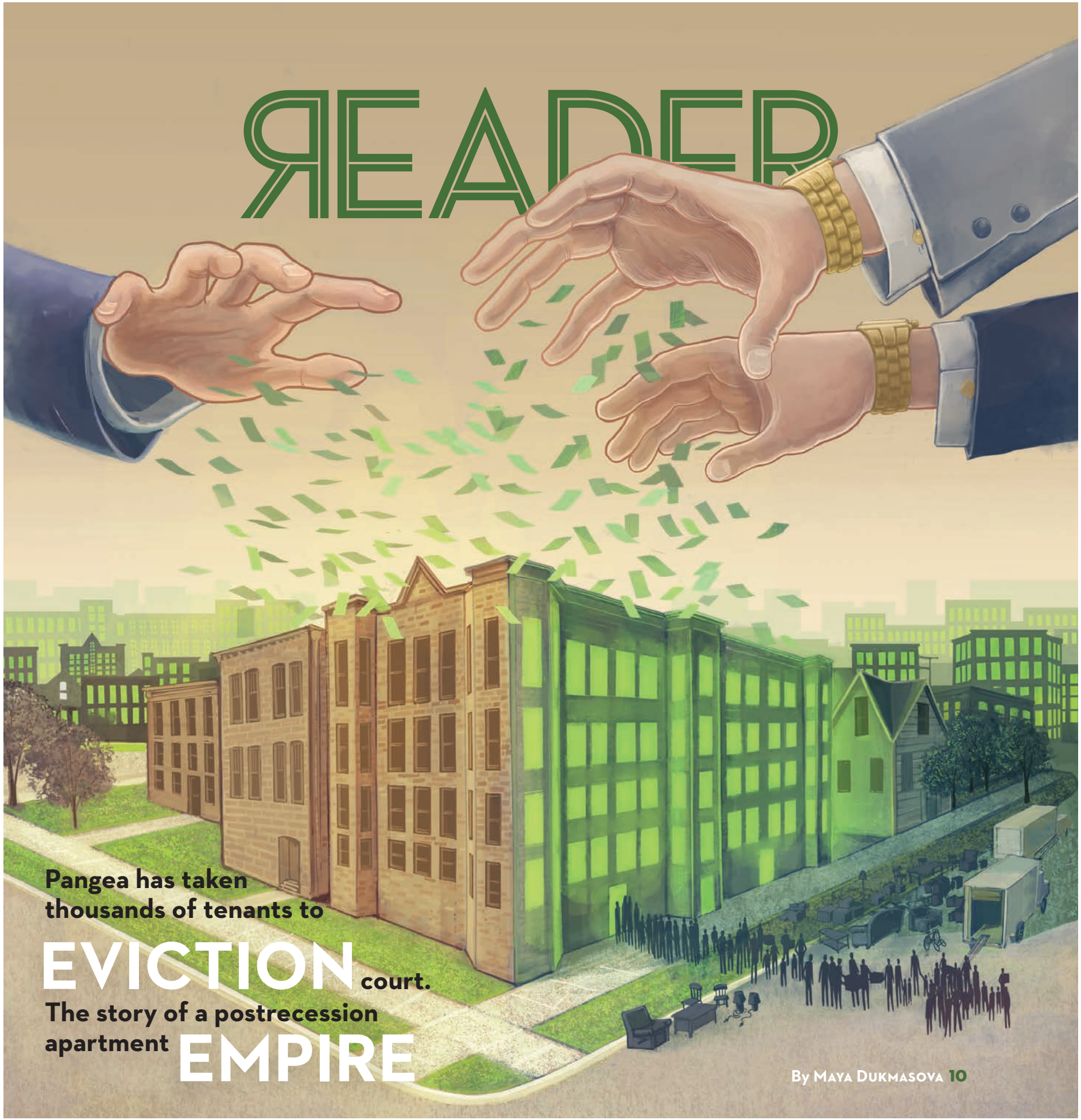


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THIS WEEK ON CHICAGOREADER.COM



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Do Re #MeToo parodies sexist songs

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Richard M. Daley © RUBY BRADFORD/FICKR



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POLITICS

Race to the bottom

The great debate: Was Mayor Rahm worse than Mayor Daley?

By BEN JORAVSKY

A few days ago, I got a question from Mick Dumke—my old pal and collaborator—that left me virtually speechless.

It came during one of our First Tuesdays shows at the Hideout. C'mon, Ben, Mick challenged me, give it to us straight: Who was better—Mayor Rahm or Richard M. Daley?

Wow. I mean, wow. What a choice!

Of course, as the guy who's spent the last three decades lambasting both mayors, I flipped the question—which one was worse?

I won't lie—this is tough. Like trying to decide which recent Bulls draft decision was worse—trading Jusuf Nurkic and Gary Harris for Doug McDermott, or passing up Draymond Green to select Marquis Teague.

Any way you look at it, you lose. But back to politics.

Daley versus Rahm. Rahm versus Daley. I've been pondering this puzzle for days—taking a break the other night to watch *The Shining* for like the 300th time. (Say what you will about Rahm and Daley—at least they never went after Shelley Duvall with an axe.)

Substantively, there's not much difference between the two. It's like everything Rahm did he learned from Daley, even as he tried to blame his predecessor for everything that was wrong, without actually mentioning him by name, of course.

On matters of police brutality, they both looked the other way and pretended it didn't exist. As state's attorney, Daley largely ignored evidence that police were torturing suspects. And Rahm only belatedly took action after a Cook County judge forced him to release the video of Jason Van Dyke shooting Laquan McDonald.

Then he was like Captain Renault in *Casa blanca*—oh, my God, police brutality in Chicago? I'm shocked! Quick, fire Garry McCarthy!

Economic Development? They followed the precepts laid down by Daley's daddy, Mayor Richard J. Daley. The Chicago 21 plan, to be exact (published in 1973).

Basically, that means gentrifying the city by showering the Loop and neighboring areas with subsidies for developers to raise both property taxes and housing costs. Make Chicago less affordable and it's only a matter of time before wealthier people move in and poorer and middle-class people get forced out. It's no wonder that Chicago's middle class continues to dwindle.

The chief culprit for this is the Tax Increment Financing program. On this front, I suppose Daley's worse as he took a perfectly reasonable tool for financing development and turned it into the scandal-ridden abomination it is today.

Of course, Rahm doubled down by arm-twisting the City Council into passing the Lincoln Yards and 78 TIF deals, which will haunt taxpayers for the next 23 years.

Consider it a tie for badness on TIFs.

On the ethical front? They both wimped out rather than challenge Alderman Ed Burke's reign as chairman of the finance committee. I'd say Rahm's wimpiness was less excusable in that he has this reputation as Mr. F-Bomb Dropping Tough Guy. Plus, he tried to justify his capitulation by saying selling out to Burke was what he had to do to get stuff through the council.

Of course, the first thing Rahm did was get the council to pass a budget that closed mental health clinics. So you might say he signed a deal with the devil in order to make life miserable for low-income people in high-crime areas.

Daley never did that.

On schools? About the same. Under Daley and Rahm, the schools were chronically underfunded. Teachers and principals did all the work as mayoral flacks tried to give the mayor all the credit.

In matters of race relations, Daley was better. Think of it this way—in his first election, Daley didn't win any Black wards. By his last election in 2007, he won all of them. So, either Black voters grew to like him or they just gave up on resistance.

Rahm took things in the opposite direction. Thanks largely to President Obama's endorsement, he got elected and re-elected with a majority of votes in the Black community.

But after the Laquan McDonald video, he probably couldn't get elected dog catcher in the Black wards. Leave it to Rahm to take race relations in Chicago—America's most segregated city—and make them worse.

On the surface Daley was better on the environment. At least he talked a good game about how much he loved trees and flowers and green roofs.

In contrast, Rahm closed the city's Department of Environment. In general, he barely feigned any interest in the matter—like it was an issue for losers.

Then again, his recycling program was better than Daley's Blue Bags.

Call it another tie.

On privatization schemes? No one can be worse than Daley—with his wretched parking meter deal. On the other hand, Rahm had the City Council reaffirm that deal.

So you might say he took a sad song and made it worse, to paraphrase the Beatles.

On the bright side, Daley built Millennium Park. So, we got something for his reign, other than higher taxes. On the other hand, his patronage chief, Robert Sorich, went to federal prison on a job rigging scheme.

Under Rahm, no patronage chief went to prison. As always, the bar's low—when it comes to corruption in Chicago.

The tiebreaker comes down to their post-mayorality behavior.

For the most part, Daley's been a pretty decent ex-mayor. He just sort of faded away, as though he recognized we'd had enough of him.

But Rahm. Man, Mayor Rahm's been insufferable from the moment he announced he wasn't running for re-election with his shameless efforts to rewrite history.

His latest attempt was an essay in the *New York Times* in which he had the gall to give Baltimore advice on how to foster better relations between the police department and the Black community.

One more time . . .

Rahm only addressed the issue, kicking and screaming, after a Cook County judge forced him to release the Laquan McDonald video.

I'd say the only thing that members of Black Lives Matter and the Fraternal Order of Police agree on is that they both despise Rahm.

Anyway, add it up and I guess Rahm wins the worst-mayor-ever race—in a photo finish.

Look on the bright side, Chicago—Lori Lightfoot's got to be better than what came before her. Right? 📷

🐦 @joravben

YOUR ONLY



RESPONSIBILITY

ON CULTURE

What's wrong with putting the rich in charge?

Author Anand Giridharadas on *Winners Take All: The Elite Charade of Changing the World*

By DEANNA ISAACS



Anand Giridharadas © MACKENZIE STROH

Just before Anand Giridharadas took the stage at the Chicago Humanities Festival earlier this month, in the auditorium at the private and pricey Francis W. Parker School in upscale Lincoln Park, a giant “Thank You” to the Robert R. McCormick Foundation flashed up on the screen. It was followed, in smaller type, by thanks to 20 other sponsors: organizations like ITW, the MacArthur Foundation, Allstate, and Bank of America.

CHF, founded by investment banker and tax-free bond guru Richard J. Franke 30 years ago (when he was CEO of John Nuveen Company), aims to “connect people and ideas to cultivate a more informed, inspired, empathetic, and participatory society.” Sometimes that gets challenging. The theme for this year’s events is “Power.”

Giridharadas is a former *New York Times* correspondent and columnist, now an editor-at-large at *Time* and a political analyst on MSNBC. Like many CHF speakers (and TED talkers—he’s also been there), he’s had a big idea, is hawking a book he just wrote about it, and has boiled it down to a handful of catchy, easily digested talking points. The book, *Winners Take All*, is an indictment of the kind of elite philanthropy practiced by all those sponsors and major donors to CHF’s brand of noblesse oblige.

Its subtitle: *The Elite Charade of Changing the World*.

An accomplished speaker with an approachable presence and an aura of cool (the uniform: waxed jeans, black blazer over black tee, sneakers, and an impressive salt and pepper coif), Giridharadas, himself a onetime McKinsey consultant and Henry Crown Fellow at the Aspen Institute, is fully aware of the ironies here.

“It’s hard in certain neighborhoods—maybe this one—to walk down the street without bumping into a millionaire or billionaire who has a foundation, who is giving back,” he said. “These guys, with bracelets from Africa.”

Giridharadas, who was born and raised in Cleveland by parents from India (“My father called us the original Cleveland Indians”), explained that his current book grew out of a “double-barreled observation” about America. It wasn’t clear whether he meant to invoke the image of a shotgun, but he was definitely taking aim at the culture.

The first half of the observation, he said, was that “we live in an age of extraordinary generosity.” This generosity isn’t just confined to charitable giving. Everybody has a social

mission (“Elon Musk is going to develop Mars in case Earth fails”), and for-profit businesses claim to be humanitarian enterprises. Go shopping, and you’ll find that iPhone cases and tote bags are going to change the world. Young people are especially mission-driven, though they’re likely to think they need to work on Wall Street first to learn how to make the change happen.

The second half of Giridharadas’s observation was that although we’ve had an amazing amount of innovation in the last 40 years (lick something, put it in the mail, and get your genome back, for example), “we live in an age of staggering, growing inequality.” Half the people don’t have enough savings to weather a \$400 emergency, he said, while “three billionaires control the same amount of wealth” as the entire bottom half of the population. The financial benefits of innovation have been “harvested [by] the very few.”

For Giridharadas, the question became, “What’s the relationship between the extraordinary elite helping and the extraordinary elite hoarding?”

And that led to other questions: “What if the extraordinary elite helping is part of how we maintain the extraordinary elite hoarding? What if the helping is the lubricant in the engine of the hoarding? What if the giving back is the wingman of the taking?”

In other words: “What if changing the world is a brilliant way of making sure that the public doesn’t get so angry that it changes your world?”

To research this, Giridharadas spent several years interviewing some of the people practicing this “MarketWorld” generated ideology of “doing well by doing good”—visiting their foundations, attending their ski-resort conferences, riding their private jets (someone has to do it). He concluded that they’ve “Columbused” a large part of the social change effort, not only by deciding which things to fund but “most importantly, by changing our collective conversation about what change is and how it’s achieved.”

What that yields, Giridharadas said, is concepts like Sheryl Sandberg’s “lean in”: “Thousands of years of patriarchy as a posture problem. That’s the kind of idea you get when we take the people who have the most to lose from real change and put them in charge of change. . . a fox’s idea of justice for hens.”

Real change in the social and political sphere, he said, is not going to be win/win. 

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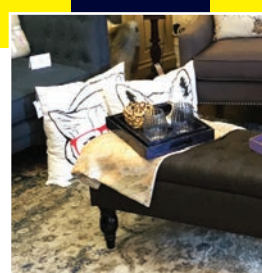
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Clockwise from top left: tikka masala, mincemeat, steak and potato, shepherd's pie
MATTHEW SCHWERIN

be found everywhere—bakeries, gas stations, convenience stores, and, particularly, footy fundraisers—in Australia's multicultural big city melting pots they're increasingly filled with things like Thai curry and tikka masala.

Arjun and Lilly Seigell had little sense of the mania said pies inspire in homesick expats when, after a visit to relatives in Sydney, they decided to open Chicago's first Australian pie shop. On opening weekend last February Lakeview's Barangaroos sold out of each of its nine varieties; not just the classics, but deliberately Yank-targeted ones like buffalo chicken, veggie pizza, and "Mexican" (steak fajitas, black bean, cheese, sour cream, pico de gallo).

All the pies at Barangaroos (named for an inner-Sydney suburb), traditional or otherwise, look exactly alike. If you're imagining something like the towering, flaky, buttery English-style pies of the great Pleasant House (maybe crowned in mash and dripping with gravy), you might be underwhelmed at first sight. They keep a low profile, and their tiny fluted circumferences look a bit machine made—which they are. Though the Seigells knead the flour and some combination of butter or lard or shortening-fattened shortcrust dough (Arjun won't say which), it is formulated into perfect pie clones—uniformly sturdy, pliant, pastry-encased casseroles—by a custom built (Arjun won't say by whom) machine. There may be nothing criminal about these pies, but there is some mystery.

But as it was in the earliest days of pie yore, it's what's inside that counts. Even though the operation is partially automated, the Seigells had to close up shop and regroup for a few days after they were bum rushed by pie-crazy expats.

That's because they're making all the fillings themselves. To the untrained American, the generally beefier varieties originally introduced by the British might seem the most exotic; minced ground beef hiding a claymore

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Barangaroos is as American as Aussie pie

Australian-style savory hand pies tell no lies, but may harbor some secrets.

By **MIKE SULA**

In Ye Olde Tymes, some food historians speculate, pie was merely a vessel for food to get to the table. Everything that came inside was eaten and the actual pastry that contained it was rubbish.

That's fine if you're King Joffrey, but what a cruel waste of flour and fat (and perhaps filler) when, presumably, so many went hungry.

The savory pie's reputation as a vessel of deception is well documented too, at least by

Shakespeare, whose Titus Andronicus fed the Queen of the Goths a pair of pies stuffed with her murdered sons. Sweeney Todd handed over his exsanguinated victims to baker-accomplice Mrs. Lovett, whose miserable pie shop found sudden success with a new recipe that didn't include cats. And again in Westeros, when Arya Stark served Walder Frey a pie made from his "damn moron sons."

While in one familiar former British colony

sweet pies became dominant, in another, Australia, savory meat pies were eventually declared the national dish. And steps have been taken to thwart dishonest pie makers, if not cannibalism: there's a law requiring that meat pies contain at least 25 percent meat, a rule that's been flouted and outed to the national disgrace a least a few times. While hand-sized pies commonly filled with steak and potato, mincemeat, or chicken and mushroom are to



FOOD & DRINK

of melted cheddar like an Anglo-Saxon Jucy Lucy; shepherd's pie, much like the former though complicated with peas and carrots; and steak and potato, its Chunky Soup viscosity laced with the sharp vinegar bite of Worcestershire.

Arjun Seigell says two of those are among his best sellers, though on the day I tried seven of his nine pies, he was sold out of the aforementioned Mexican. Other flavors will probably be more familiar to the formerly colonized. Interestingly, these are all built around diced chicken breast, a muscle that by its very nature requires aggressive seasoning. The tikka masala (another top seller) is a sweet, lightly curried vehicle, while the buffalo chicken is also a bit cloying, but still layered in a foundation of spicy, buttery, blue cheese lava. Of them all the only one that backs down from any kind of fight is the chicken and mushroom, which seems to build a sturdy bridge between English sobriety and midwestern blandness.

Here's where it's important to issue a warning. To paraphrase New Zealand traffic cop Sergeant Guy Baldwin, the pies when heated

are "thermonuclear," as he lectured a young hooligan in a 2009 viral YouTube video: "You must always blow on the pie."

That actually won't do much good. As I mentioned, it's what's inside that counts, a lesson learned more than once after jets of scalding pie innards lashed across my hands after biting into them. "Hand pies," you say? Sick burn, Australia.

The Seigells, like some of the most interesting characters in the restaurant business, are specialists. It's just pies, a couple soups, some bags of Darrel Lea licorice and bottles of Bundaberg soda. But they've heard the clamoring of their Australian customers and soon will introduce a few other iconic Australian snacks: sausage rolls and lamingtons, jam-filled chocolate-coconut covered snack cakes. A different constituency has also spoken. Plans are afoot to introduce a vegan hand pie, which, if adhering to Australian law, should earn them a night in the stockades, but here, will probably get a pass. 

 @MikeSula



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JUSTIN SANTORA

Pangea has taken thousands of tenants to **EVICTION** court. The story of a postrecession apartment **EMPIRE**

The company has claimed credit for reviving south and west side communities, even as it's filed more than 9,000 eviction cases since 2009.

By **MAYA DUKMASOVA**

Krystal Horton arrived at the downtown court building that Thursday morning in June with her two kids in tow and only minutes to spare before her 9:30 eviction hearing. She found a long line at security, struggled to get her baby daughter's stroller through the X-ray, and lost more time scrambling to the Daley Center's childcare room on the 13th floor, only to learn that the staff can't admit a kid under two. By the time she made it to the courtroom she figures she was at least 15 minutes late for the hearing.

A trial had been held without her. She'd been evicted and would have to vacate her apartment immediately or be prepared for sheriff's deputies to show up any day. A judgment was entered against her, which marked in her credit history that she owed her landlord \$2,241.

This was in 2016. Horton, then 34, had been

living with her kids, 1 and 11, in a four-story brick courtyard building in East Chatham for a year and a half. The property had been foreclosed and boarded up and was on the city's troubled building list until a local real estate company bought and rehabbed it four years before she moved in.

Horton had been working as a full-time certified nursing assistant with a hospice company—work she got into after caring for her father as he died from ALS. She'd had a lot of challenges in her 20s—marrying right out of high school and getting divorced; suffering a life-threatening bite to the face from her beloved dog, which resulted in reconstructive surgery; dropping out of college after getting pregnant; fighting one ex for years to receive child support for their son; and more fights with another ex over child support for her baby daughter. Still, she has an optimistic and resilient disposition, and the two-bedroom apartment in Chatham represented “independence. That I could do it as a single parent, even with all the struggles I had going on, that I could provide for my family, put a roof over our heads. It gave me sunlight to a brighter future.”

The exterior of the building was “immaculate,” she remembered. Landscaping that included neat flower beds and crenellation around the roof gave it the air of a castle. Horton was mostly satisfied with her unit: it was roomy, with hardwood floors and good light through its third-floor windows. But there were issues. The toilet clogged easily, and after heavy rain she'd see cracks and mold on the walls. This worried her because of her son's asthma, but she said it would take several calls to get the landlord to send a repairman, and he wouldn't do much beyond spray paint over the mold anyway. Her biggest concern, though, was that the gates of the property were frequently broken; since she had a tumultuous relationship with her daughter's father she didn't want him to have easy access to her front door.

Around the time her daughter was born in 2015, Horton was laid off. For several months after she freelanced, driving around the Chicago area to care for dying people in their homes. In April 2016, after her car required more than \$2,000 in repairs for a broken transmission, she couldn't cover the \$717 monthly rent.

She thought she had an understanding with her property manager—she said he'd agreed to let her pay what she could at the beginning of May and take some time to catch up on what she owed. But a new guy who replaced him wouldn't accept partial payments. The eviction case against Horton was filed on May 20.

Nearly a month later, a private detective showed up at her door with a summons addressed to someone else living at a building owned by the same landlord a mile away. Horton said that when she pointed out the error, the detective told her to go to court anyway. It

“Being put out of the property after two months was very discouraging. When you have someone who fell on hard times and they want to pay and they have the money to pay, I think that's something they should have considered.”

—former Pangea tenant Krystal Horton

didn't feel right to her. “If my name is on the lease then anything pertaining to the lease is gonna have my name on it.” (Indeed, per state law, serving someone with a summons that isn't addressed to them or to anyone over the age of 13 at the same address doesn't constitute service.) The summons included an ominous warning in legalese: “If you do not file an appearance and contest the claim a judgment by default may be entered for the relief requested in the complaint, ordering that you be evicted.”

Horton was determined to fight her case; she said she wanted to stay in her unit and believed she'd be able to scrape together the back rent soon. She didn't realize that being late to her June hearing would mean that her eviction would be set in stone. In the courtroom that day, a uniformed bailiff suggested she file a motion to ask the judge to reconsider. Horton did just that. She wrote the motion in neat cursive, requesting “the opportunity to make payment arrangements and continue residing in the unit. I was served the wrong paperwork and would like the chance to represent myself in court.”

Horton had the right idea: because she wasn't properly served with a correct summons the eviction judgment could be thrown out and her landlord would have to restart the case from scratch. In fact, tenants can always ask judges to reconsider eviction orders; within the first month any judge can hear their motions, but afterward a tenant has to go back to the same judge that ordered the eviction.

Her chances looked good. After she filed her motion she got a July 29 hearing date. But once again, she was late. The judge struck ➔



Krystal Horton (top) was evicted from a Pangea property in East Chatham in 2016. Eyevie McHenry (bottom) was evicted from a Pangea building in Austin in 2018.
 © TRAVIS ROOZÉE

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her motion—which isn’t the same as a denial. A strike is an erasure of the request rather than a decision that it has no merit. Horton would have to file another motion, and later that day she did.

Her second motion was struck in early August, “for lack of jurisdiction.” Horton was in court on time but because a month had passed since the eviction was entered, the assigned judge sent the case back to the first judge who had evicted her. She filed a third motion, which was struck again, this time without explanation.

By then, it was late August. Her hopes of being able to stay in the East Chatham apartment had dwindled. She started packing her belongings, although she said she was under the impression that the sheriff couldn’t put her out while she had motions pending. Things became increasingly chaotic in her personal life around then too. Her daughter’s father punched her son and was arrested (he later pleaded guilty). She was going to court to deal with that case as she was fighting the eviction.

The fourth and final motion she filed was terse and no longer attempted to challenge the summons. “I am requesting time to pay owed rent and stay in the above unit,” she wrote. She was granted a court date of September 2. The morning after she submitted the motion, August 24, the sheriff’s deputies came to evict at 11:30. Horton was at work, she said, but arrived later that day to a neon-green “no trespassing” sticker on her front door. The locks had been changed. She called the property manager.

“I said ‘Hey, what’s going on? I have legal documents, I have a court date,’” she recalled. She said he gave her a two-hour window the next day to clear out—a day she remembered as a blurred rush to salvage her possessions. “I went into a cougar moment,” she described, trying to pack what was most important and deal with the expensive movers she was forced to hire at the last minute to take her furniture to a storage unit. “I had a full furnished living room, two furnished bedrooms, I had toys, I had a crib—that’s a lot to get out in two hours.”

She remembers scrambling, leaving mattresses and other furniture in the building’s hallways, thinking she could retrieve them the next day.

“I was able to get a good half of my things out but I lost lots of my clothes, my ironing board, a lot of my son’s toys, furniture, a high chair, my TV. I had a whole fridge full of food, pots and pans, silverware.” She inventoried these things with a speed that belied the anguish of the losses. “Two big containers of

Legos my son had saved up for eight years. I had two totes full of scrubs . . .” She figures she left at least \$5,000 worth of stuff behind.

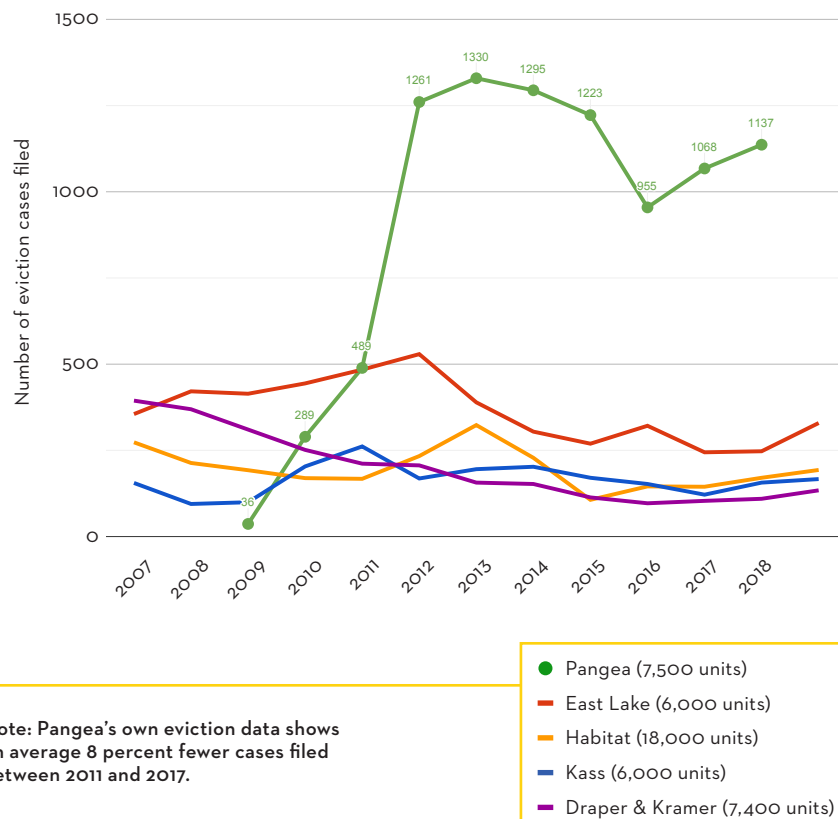
Horton wanted to come back to collect more of her things the next day, but had no luck reaching the property manager. One year later, she still couldn’t believe that all of this was over a couple months of back rent. She had figured a large company would be more lenient, give her at least three, maybe even six months to catch up on rent before taking her to court. “On my block alone they had my building, the building across the street, on the corner, on the next corner. They had a block radius of apartments on the block in Chatham where I lived,” she said. “Being put out of the property after two months [of not paying rent] was very discouraging.” It didn’t make sense to her that they wouldn’t want to take her money by the time she’d gotten it together in August. But she also understood the landlord’s perspective. “You gotta cover expenses for the building, you gotta pay for property managers, for the cleanup—all that is costs,” she said. “But when you have someone who fell on hard times and they want to pay and they have the money to pay, I think that’s something they should have considered.”

It’s difficult to overstate the degree of historical disinterest in the eviction of renters in Chicago, a city where issues of race and poverty have been meticulously scrutinized by academics, the media, and the government for decades. While public housing and its troubles were the stuff of books, studies, TV specials, film, and endless news coverage, rental housing in poor neighborhoods went largely unexamined—particularly the financial and social dynamics between landlords and tenants. The last research study of Chicago’s eviction court was published in 2003 and until now little has been known about the outcomes of the approximately 20,000 cases filed there every year. (County court data isn’t subject to the Freedom of Information Act and is released at the discretion of the chief judge; requests can take months to process.) Evictions have mostly sparked public debate when they’ve touched homeowners, particularly during the Contract Buyers’ League battle against predatory home sellers beginning in the late 1960s and during the recent mortgage foreclosure crisis.

This inattention to eviction is not unique to Chicago. For much of America’s urban history, eviction has been a phenomenon in the shadows of personal embarrassment about poverty, racist and classist stereotypes about who is being evicted, and political ideologies that

Landlords filing the most eviction cases in Chicago

SOURCE: CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY



Note: Pangea’s own eviction data shows on average 8 percent fewer cases filed between 2011 and 2017.

place renters’ welfare second to landlords’ property rights. It wasn’t until 2016, when sociologist Matthew Desmond published his book *Evicted*—a landmark study of the effects of eviction on tenants, landlords, and neighborhoods—that the problem entered into popular consciousness as a massive social

“If not for Pangea, the south side would not be what it is today.”

—Pangea founder Al Goldstein

issue worth caring about. Desmond found that eviction affects Black women at about the same rate as incarceration affects Black men and that it can plunge low-income households facing an unexpected financial emergency into an unstoppable cycle of poverty.

Last year, Desmond launched the Eviction

Lab at Princeton University and created the first national database of court-ordered evictions. But examining court data offers only a narrow glimpse of the scale of the eviction crisis and doesn’t account for “off-the-books” tenant displacements due to gentrification or landlord neglect. (In Milwaukee, Desmond found, only about a quarter of evictions were the result of a formal court process.)

The Eviction Lab’s data indicates that national eviction case filings have been on the decline since 2012, in tandem with the economic recovery. (This is true for Chicago, too, a *Reader* analysis of court records showed.) Even so, in 2016 alone, almost a million of the nation’s 43.3 million renter households were evicted—that’s about how many homeowners were foreclosed on at the height of the recession.

“If that amount holds up, and we’re seeing that amount of eviction every year, that’s like seeing the foreclosure crisis every year,” said Lavar Edmonds, a research specialist at the Lab. “For those who, I don’t know . . . have a soul, that should be alarming.”

Most evictions are prompted by unpaid rent—rent that’s becoming unaffordable ➔



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How eviction works

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANNA JO BECK



Tenant falls behind on rent



Tenant violates lease



Landlord wants a tenant out¹

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to a growing segment of the population. Yet research on how landlords may be driving the affordability crisis is scarce and conversations about profiteering are politically unpopular. In January, Desmond and MIT's Nathan Wilmers published a paper in the *American Journal of Sociology* attempting to answer a simple question: "Do the Poor Pay More for Housing?" They found that nationwide, and in Milwaukee in particular, tenants in poor neighborhoods are systematically overcharged for rent relative to the value of their landlords' properties and that landlords in poor neighborhoods make more profit than those in middle-income and wealthy neighborhoods. But much more research remains to be done on these dynamics in Chicago, where the study of evictions is still in its infancy. While the narrative that emerged from the foreclosure crisis was about irresponsible banks greedily colluding against hapless families striving to fulfill the American Dream, eviction is still typically seen as a deadbeat's problem.

To combat this stereotype, eviction researchers have focused on the wider impact of individual tenants' displacement. "As you see higher rates of eviction you risk tampering with the social cohesion in a neighborhood," Edmonds said. Studies are now finding that crime rates, employment, mental health, and other markers of neighborhood well-being are affected as tenants churn through buildings and their children churn through schools.

Indeed, the areas of Chicago where the most evictions occur—Black neighborhoods on the south and west sides—also have the highest rates of joblessness and violent crime. These neighborhoods bore the brunt of the city's

This can take a few days to a few months. Service is first attempted by Cook County Sheriff's deputies, then can be done by a private entity authorized by the court. Service must be done in person to someone over the age of 13 at the unit. With a judge's permission a summons can be posted publicly or put in the mailbox if personal service has been attempted and failed.



Eviction case filed in Cook County Circuit Court²

Five to 30 days pass



Tenant given notice: "Pay up or else!"

"Comply with the rules of the lease or else!"

"Vacate the unit or else!"



Tenant is served a summons to court

Seven to 40 days pass



Tenant's first court appearance

If a tenant gets a lawyer and/or fights the case, weeks or months can pass.

TRIAL³



Eviction judgment **60 percent** of the time. Tenant is ordered to leave or be put out by the Cook County Sheriff's office

Case dismissed **40 percent** of the time

DEAL



It takes weeks or months for the sheriff's office to actually come around. In the winter there's a holiday moratorium on eviction enforcement. The sheriff also can't enforce when the temperature dips below 15 degrees or when there's extreme weather.



Sheriff's office enforces eviction and removes tenant⁴



Tenant may move out as a condition of the case being dismissed in exchange for their record remaining clean



Tenant can remain in the unit. Landlord may re-open a case and get an eviction judgment without a trial if the tenant fails to comply with a pay-and-stay deal

1. Chicago and Cook County don't have "just cause" eviction laws so landlords can raise rents or defer maintenance to pressure tenants to leave. Landlords can also stop accepting rent payments and tell tenants to clear out.

2. This costs the landlord about \$400 per case. About 20,000 eviction cases are filed in Chicago every year.

3. One third of Chicago tenants go through trial on their first day in court. A trial can happen even if a tenant doesn't show up. Almost all eviction trials are heard by a judge, not a jury.

4. The sheriff's office has enforced on average 42 percent of Chicago eviction judgments issued in the last five years.

school and mental health clinic closures. These are neighborhoods that have the most city ticket debt and the most bankruptcy filings, where homeowners and small businesses are burdened with unfairly high property tax assessments, and where Chicago police officers conduct the most stops and are most accused of misconduct. These are the neighborhoods where one company saw a golden business opportunity.

Pangea, the company that owns Horton's old building and 35 others in a half-square-mile area of East Chatham, started buying buildings in economically beleaguered south and west side neighborhoods in 2009, the year they began operating out of a squat glass office building in River North.

The company's history is often told as a tale of benevolent intervention. Amid a disastrous recession, Pangea offered hope for a return of investment in Black neighborhoods hit hardest by foreclosures and the folding of community banks that had once financed an ecosystem of mom-and-pop landlords. The company fixed up dilapidated apartment buildings by the block, restoring the architectural character of historic neighborhoods. Often, it bought properties from the city's troubled building list and successfully restored them to safe habitability, city records and officials confirm.

Led by a team of young, mostly white men with backgrounds in finance and tech, Pangea—known variably as Pangea Real Estate, Pangea Ventures, Pangea Properties, and Pangea Equity Partners—presented itself as a modern real estate player that stuck to old-school business principles. The company would buy, rehab, and directly operate apartment buildings without involving middle-men property managers. They also used “data and analytics” to screen tenants and triage maintenance.

Al Goldstein, the company's founder and now board chair, describes Pangea simply: “We're good guys” catalyzing economic revival in south and west side neighborhoods and providing affordable housing to the working class. During an interview with the *Reader* last summer, he said that the company's mission from the beginning was to build a big, sustainable business on the foundation of high-quality customer service. “Buy these buildings, reinvest in them, make them nice, re-tenant them, and prove to all of the third-party constituents that this can actually work,” he said. By “this,” he means a successful, tech-savvy, non-slum-lordy real estate business reliant on low-income renters.

Goldstein is 38 years old, but he looks young-

er. He's got muscular arms, gelled hair, slightly sad eyes, and a persistent five o'clock shadow. He dresses casually and though he appears to like talking he always seems slightly shy in the spotlight, whole words nearly disappearing from his quick-clipped speech. But despite this modest manner he's got a killer instinct and a track record of building successful businesses. Though he once joked that Pangea was named after the ancient supercontinent to reflect the company's “world dominance aspirations,” he's since generally adopted a more sophisticated manner in describing the company's goals. He says it was never Pangea's intention to flip these buildings or to sit on them and let them deteriorate in anticipation of higher property values. “We have a long-term view: we're going to own forever.”

Goldstein and his cofounders pitched Pangea to investors with this narrative: Chicago's low-income neighborhoods were “in a tough situation because the financial crisis hit them really hard,” and would-be investors had the power to help. Goldstein said it wasn't a hard

“We have a deep-rooted interest in the neighborhoods we serve and have done it the right way.”

—Pangea CEO Pete Martay

sell. He closed deals with visual aids. “You look at the before photo, you look at the after photo, and look at the people that actually move into the buildings. They're really happy.”

Pangea grew quickly. In 2009 the company began with a handful of employees and acquired nearly 1,200 apartments in Chicago. The next year its portfolio doubled. By the end of 2012 the company owned more than 4,000 units in Chicago and more in the south and west suburbs. It had also expanded into Baltimore and Indianapolis, and raised about \$180 million from investors including Wall Streeters, west coast venture capitalists, and legendary local financiers like Norman Bobins and Jim Reynolds, both of whom sit on Pangea's board of directors.

Goldstein made *Crain's* 40 under 40 at 32. By the time he took a step back from running Pangea to launch a new company in 2013, an effi-

cient system for acquisition, rehab, and tenant relations was in place. Pangea would spend between \$15,000 and \$20,000 to purchase each unit, Goldstein explained in interviews with *Chicago* magazine and on tastytrade.com's finance talk show “Bootstrapping in America.” Then they'd spend about the same amount to rehab, as the company revived historic masonry and hardwood floors, fixed plumbing and HVAC, and installed new kitchen cabinetry and appliances. The investments paid off.

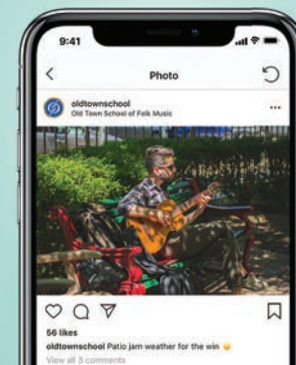
Forbes reported that Pangea's revenue had grown by an impressive 13,323 percent since its founding—from \$500,000 in 2009 to \$60 million at the end of 2013. That year, Pangea also broke onto *Inc.*'s list of the 50 fastest-growing companies in the country, and became by far the fastest growing company in Chicago. Soon it would launch a separate property management business to provide services to other apartment building owners and a financial services spin-off company, Pangea Mortgage Capital, to provide loans to real estate investors across the country. Pangea now owns and operates 13,000 apartments across all of its markets and its revenue is estimated at more than \$113 million.

Goldstein and current CEO Pete Martay said Pangea has invested \$400 million in private capital into Chicago's distressed real estate and created 350 full-time jobs in the city. The company's leaders are particularly proud of its investment in Horton's old neighborhood, where they said they have infused more than \$20 million and brought 716 apartments back to market after the foreclosure crisis.

This investment has been generously rewarded by the press and Pangea's peers. Between 2013 and 2016 Pangea got multiple “Upstanding Rehab & Redevelopment” awards from the Chicago Association of Realtors. *Forbes* judged it to be one of America's “most promising companies,” *Crain's* recognized it as a top job creator, the *Tribune* recognized it as a “top place to work,” and recruiting firm Brill Street ranked it as one of Chicago's top 50 employers “for emerging Gen Y talent.”

And the company has been giving back too, as Goldstein and Martay told the *Reader* in interviews and e-mail exchanges. Pangea launched a charitable foundation, Pangea Cares, donating more than \$1 million for neighborhood beautification, school backpack giveaways, food drives, and internship programs. Goldstein claimed the foundation also invested \$250,000 into the creation of the Chicago Police Department's Strategic Decision Support Centers—a collaboration with the University of Chicago that uses technology for more targeted policing in the ➔

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neighborhoods where Pangea has many properties. (CPD and U. of C. would not confirm this.) The company has also donated more than \$46,000 to local politicians since 2009, including \$18,100 to Eighth Ward alderman Michelle Harris and her political organization and \$11,000 to Rahm Emanuel. Pangea even collaborated with *The Steve Harvey Show* to offer a furnished apartment rent-free for a year to a family that was homeless after an eviction.

“We have a deep-rooted interest in the neighborhoods we serve and have done it the right way,” Martay told the *Reader* in an e-mail.

But while the press and start-up watchers swooned over Pangea’s prodigious growth and its apparent participation in a renaissance of struggling neighborhoods, something else was going on too. In a matter of three years, Pangea had become not only one of the largest real estate companies in Chicago; it had also become the city’s most prolific filer of eviction cases.

A *Reader* analysis of Cook County eviction court data from 2007 through 2018—which includes 250,000 cases filed against Chicago tenants—shows that since its founding Pangea has taken as many people to court as the next four landlords combined. The company owns and operates 7,500 units in Chicago. In 2018 it filed 1,137 eviction cases. The second most prolific evictor last year, with 247 cases, was East Lake Management, a property management company with 6,000 units in neighborhoods similar to Pangea’s. (Full disclosure: In October 2018 the *Reader* was purchased by a new investment group headed by Elzie Higginbottom, the founder of East Lake, and two of East Lake’s executives are involved with the company’s board. This investigation predates these relationships.)

Goldstein told the *Reader* that Pangea’s evictions are a “nonstory” and that it isn’t fair to compare Pangea, an owner-operator, with the other top filers because companies like East Lake, Habitat, or Kass mostly function as third-party property managers. He also claimed that none of these companies operate in the same neighborhoods at a scale comparable to Pangea’s.

Nearly three-quarters of Pangea’s holdings are concentrated in South Shore, Chatham, Auburn Gresham, Woodlawn, and Austin, and the company is now responsible for as much as a fifth of all eviction cases in those neighborhoods.

Over the last year and a half, the *Reader* has



Pangea’s apartment empire consists mostly of buildings with more than six units. Nearly three-quarters of their holdings are in South Shore, Chatham, Auburn Gresham, Woodlawn, and Austin.  TRAVIS ROOZÉE

interviewed three dozen current and former Pangea tenants and nearly a dozen current and former employees. We observed hearings for more than 100 eviction cases filed by Pangea and examined records from more than 100 lawsuits filed against the company. We spoke with attorneys and advocates for landlords and tenants, with local and national experts researching housing issues, with city officials,

and with Pangea’s neighbors and competitors.

Two conflicting images of the company emerged from these records, observations, and interviews. On the one hand, Pangea is reviving apartment buildings in neighborhoods reeling from the recession. This is the image the company promotes, and a positive impact on the neighborhoods is discernible. On the other hand, Pangea appears to be

subverting its own stated mission of neighborhood stabilization by taking a tremendous number of tenants to court, undermining their housing security both immediately and for years into the future.

To date, the company has filed more than 9,000 cases against tenants across the city. Pangea’s own data, which the company shared with the *Reader* (and which shows annual

eviction case filing numbers on average 8 percent lower than those reported by the Circuit Court), indicates that it's taken on average nearly 17 percent of its tenants to eviction court every year between 2013 and 2017. That's one case filed for every six units. According to Cook County court records, 60 to 70 percent of Pangea's tenants who are filed on are ultimately evicted. Eviction case filings—even those that don't ultimately result in evictions—tend to haunt renters for years, limiting their options for safe, affordable housing.

When asked about Pangea's eviction filing rates and other problems reported about the company, Goldstein and Martay repeatedly said there are criminal bad actors taking advantage of tenants in the neighborhoods where they operate. They cited the nonprofit Better Housing Foundation and EquityBuild, both of which were mired in scandal last summer—the former for keeping a large number of properties in disrepair while board members enriched themselves, the latter for being an alleged real estate Ponzi scheme. In an e-mail Martay expressed concern that these companies' collapses “will put a significant strain on the areas they serve and the city building department. . . . Between these two groups they amassed a portfolio of over 2,500 units in Chicago.” He said he worried that these neglected units would fall into chronic disrepair, hurting tenants and neighbors alike. (In March, *Crain's* reported that Pangea was moving to buy a 44-unit building in South Shore formerly owned by EquityBuild.)

Though much is now known about EquityBuild's and Better Housing Foundation's operations due to pending litigation, the inner workings of Pangea's business are opaque. As a privately held real estate investment trust, it isn't legally obligated to report expenses or revenue, much less profits. Pangea's investors—other than ex-Governor Bruce Rauner, who was forced to make financial disclosures while in office—remain largely in the shadows. Even the exact contours of Pangea's empire are hard to confirm. Each building is owned by one of Pangea's hundreds of shell LLCs, usually bearing vaguely geological, geographic, or elemental names such as “Rodinia,” “Eurasia,” or “Seaborgium” or alphanumeric titles such as “PP P7 3.” Assigning each building's ownership to a different legal entity is common in the real estate business, to protect the owner's other assets from being seized in case of litigation at one property. The company often transfers buildings between these shell LLCs too. Indeed, some of the lawsuits filed against the company over the years, claiming everything from slippery hallway floors to apartment ceil-

ings caving in, were dismissed because they weren't filed against the correct Pangea LLC.

Some observers are concerned about the outsized presence of the company in low-income neighborhoods. In South Shore, for example, Pangea owns approximately 8 percent of the apartment buildings with five or more units, according to data analyzed by Geoff Smith, the director of the DePaul Institute for

“The only issue with Pangea is if they ever fold, if they ever don't make it, it's gonna be chaos. They're just so huge.”

—west-side landlord
Duane Ehresman

Housing Studies. That's “a pretty substantial market share for one private owner,” Smith said. South Shore is part of a swath of Black neighborhoods close to the lakefront where the Institute has found Cook County's most severe gap between the supply and demand for affordable housing.

Building ownership consolidating disproportionately in one company's hands may leave these neighborhoods more vulnerable to future real estate market crises. Even fellow landlords who generally see Pangea as a positive presence said that the health of the real estate business in the neighborhoods where they operate now rests heavily on Pangea's success. “The only issue with Pangea is if they ever fold, if they ever don't make it, it's gonna be chaos,” said Duane Ehresman, a longtime landlord on the west side who owns and operates about 600 units, mostly in Austin. “They're just so huge.” (As it happens, Ehresman files one case for every eight units—a rate much closer to Pangea's than the large property managers'.)

In recent years, Pangea is increasingly concerning tenant advocacy groups too—not so much for evictions, since filing statistics aren't reported publicly by the courts, but for the living conditions in its buildings. The Metropolitan Tenants Organization—a nonprofit that educates and organizes renters and runs an advice hotline—now receives more calls about Pangea than any other landlord. While the complaints about mold, rodents, bedbugs, and disrepair are the same as for many other

landlords in the low-income apartment market, the organization said no company has as many tenants complain about unexpected fees—for routine maintenance requests and heat repair, and, most notably, for water. David Wilson of MTO said he's gotten a rash of calls from Pangea tenants reporting that the company billed them for water weeks or months after “the manager told them ‘Don't worry about [a water bill], that's just on the lease but you don't have to pay.’” These charges, which Pangea calculates based on a building's entire water bill divided by the square footage of each unit (rather than a tenant's individual usage) can add up to an extra \$30 or \$40 every month.

Frank Avellone, an attorney and policy coordinator at the Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing, said improving housing quality and reviving real estate in low-income neighborhoods isn't an excuse for nickel-and-diming cash-strapped tenants. “There are some companies that buy dilapidated properties and put them into decent condition and rent them at affordable rates—we know lots of companies that do that, in fact that's laudable,” he said. “I don't see why it has to carry with it these more oppressive ways of conducting business,” he continued, describing Pangea. “It sort of feels like a payday lender.”

Funny he should say that. In the summer of 2015, Goldstein sat stiffly in an armchair during a taping of the “Chicago Founders' Stories” talk show and explained to the host what prompted him to found Pangea at the tender age of 28.

Following the financial crisis, apartment buildings with fewer than 100 units were “sub-scale” for big-time investors who still had some capital to throw around, he said. “Institutional investors can't invest in those—but they make up 80 percent of the unit stock. . . . We figured out then we could actually build something really interesting if we used the technology and analytics and operational capability we had used at Enova.” Enova was the reason Goldstein found himself awash in cash right when, in his words, “the world kind of exploded.”

Goldstein, who emigrated with his family from the Soviet Union when he was eight, began his career at Deutsche Bank in New York City. But he found investment banking overwhelming and “not necessarily super meaningful,” as he put it during an interview with the *Reader* last summer. He read “a lot of *Rich Dad, Poor Dad* books” and contemplated going into real estate. His longtime mentor, options trader David Shorr, even agreed to be his first

investor. They got a deal on a seven-unit building in Rogers Park. But it was 2003, and when they gamed out what kind of money they could make renting, the math “wasn't super compelling.” Shorr soon pitched him on a more lucrative idea: payday lending.

“I'd never even heard of what a payday loan or subprime loan was, or what a check-cashing store actually did,” Goldstein told me. But Shorr convinced him to quit Wall Street. “He had this great line which I actually use to this day: ‘I want to put you in a position to benefit from your own hard work.’”

The two opened their first store, The Check Giant, in January 2004 in the center of the second-poorest census tract in Kenosha, Wisconsin—where, just across the Illinois state line, state regulations didn't cap interest rates. They made high-interest, small-dollar, short-term loans to people who didn't have other options for cash in a pinch.

The early 2000s were boom times for payday lenders; Goldstein and Shorr's store became profitable within three months. They launched a second location in Racine and let customers apply online through CashNetUSA, which supplanted the brick-and-mortar operation within a year. Goldstein doesn't have much patience for the idea that payday lending is exploitative, and said critics tend to talk about it “very ideologically and academically and they never think about, OK what if I was in that situation?” The typical industry defense has always been that a high-interest loan is better than no loan—or, you know, better than going to a loan shark.

During Goldstein's tenure at the company, CashNetUSA garnered a reputation for not being the worst of online payday lenders. A few lawsuits claiming unfair debt collection practices and interest rates as high as 1,100 percent never went anywhere, and Goldstein described the company as “the best subprime lender that there was.”

Still, Goldstein said everything he's done since “is much more interesting and much bigger.” He avoided calling his first businesses by their names, instead referring to his time in payday lending as “the Enova days.” (By mid-2006 CashNetUSA had grown into a company licensed to lend in 27 states. Cash America, a publicly traded pawn shop chain, bought it for \$265 million. *Forbes* once reported that Goldstein pocketed \$70 million from the sale, but he declined to confirm that. Cash America eventually spun off CashNetUSA into a new company, Enova International, which operates nearly a dozen online subprime lending businesses across four continents and has reported record profits in recent years.) ➔

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Indeed the “Enova days” don’t even get a nod on Goldstein’s LinkedIn page.

After five years in payday lending, Goldstein (and his best friend Steve Joung, who’d also worked at Enova) founded Pangea, and his reputation for generating good returns for investors helped boost their personal start-up capital. As Goldstein explained it, he and his partners “just went back to the same people [who invested in The Check Giant and CashNetUSA], said, ‘Hey, we just made you guys a lot of money, we’re personally investing significantly into this new venture. We don’t know much about real estate but we knew even less about digital lending. So we’re moving up in the world.’”

In early 2013 Goldstein pivoted back to consumer finance and founded Avant, a company specializing in short-term loans with 10 to 36 percent interest rates for the “just below prime” consumer. “It was just a good time for me to step back [from Pangea] and do something new because the business was at a great place,” Goldstein told me. “I just love building companies.”

Some Pangea investors—most notably venture capitalist Dave Marquardt, an early investor in Microsoft—were pleased enough with the real estate business’s performance that they were ready to put big institutional funds behind Goldstein’s next idea. By 2015 Avant was valued at \$2 billion. Though its lending model is generally seen as a step above the predatory approach of payday lenders, this year the Federal Trade Commission filed a suit alleging Avant had overcharged and misled hundreds of borrowers and made unauthorized withdrawals from their bank accounts. In April Avant settled for \$3.85 million.

Avant’s headquarters at Wacker and LaSalle is only six blocks from the building where Pangea started, but it feels worlds apart from the end-of-the-hallway office above an Infiniti dealership where, until last year, Pangea’s executives presided over their real estate empire. (Pangea recently relocated to a loft in the West Loop.) Goldstein has moved on up from a cozy suite with beanbag chairs, board games, and accent walls painted in Pangea’s signature lime green to Avant’s cavernous, two-story tech office mecca with a gourmet kitchen, arcade games, and a 17th-floor terrace. Visitors are required to sign nondisclosure agreements at the front desk. Fully conforming to the stereotype of an understated tech entrepreneur, Goldstein wore a green T-shirt, jeans, and scuffed-up white canvas shoes when we met in one of Avant’s dozens of small, glass-walled conference rooms. He came alone and only

2017 Chicago eviction filings by zip code

SOURCE: CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY

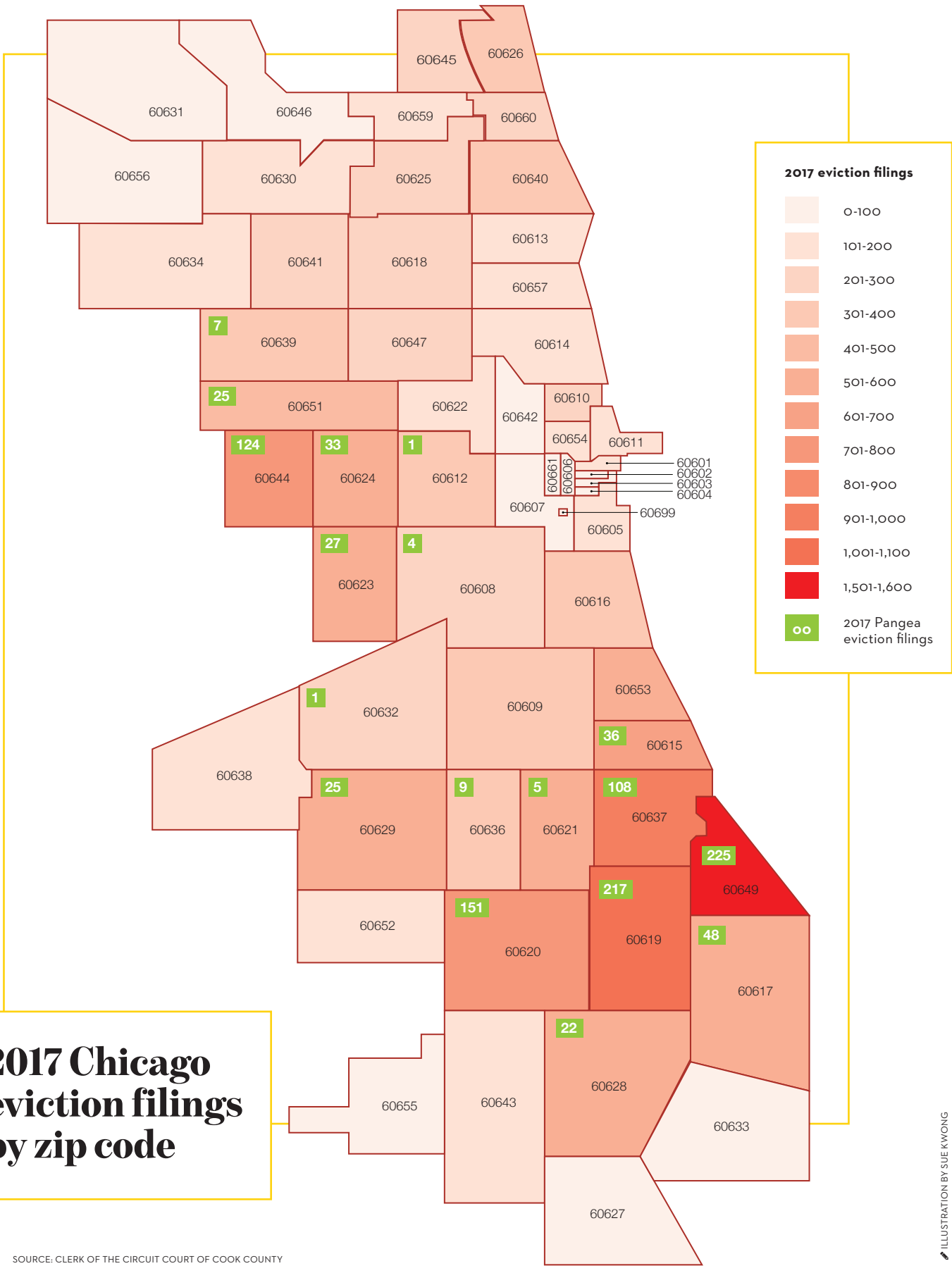
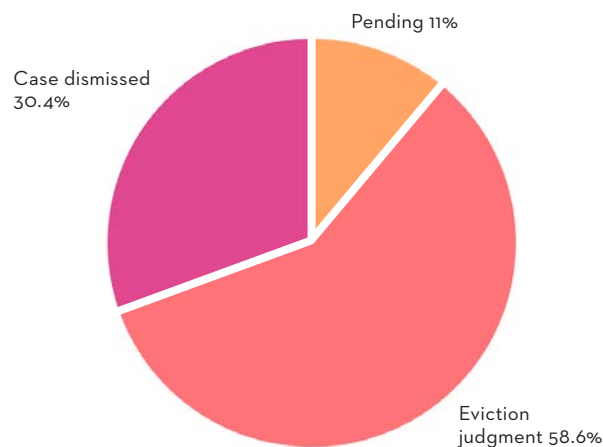


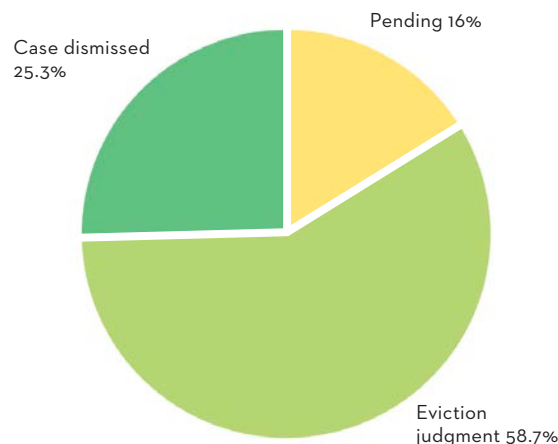
ILLUSTRATION BY SUE KWONG

2017 Chicago eviction case outcomes

Data current as of September 2018. Cases aren't necessarily resolved in the same year they're filed. SOURCE: CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY



All Chicago landlords
(17,271 cases)



Pangea
(1,068 cases)

brought some water in a well-worn plastic cup with his initials scrawled on it in black marker.

He seemed both cagey and eager to convince me that Pangea—for which he still feels comfortable speaking despite the fact that he's retreated from management to board chairmanship—hasn't done anything wrong. He brought up my “extremely unfair” 2017 article on the scope of the eviction problem in South Shore, in which I had named Pangea as the top filer of cases and for which I'd made numerous attempts to contact the company for comment. Pangea never responded. “I think they felt the agenda was to write a negative article so it was better not to talk to you.”

Though he didn't dispute the eviction filing numbers I presented, he argued that they were symptomatic of a phase of intense building acquisition in the company's early years and not part of the regular operating procedures at Pangea—something directly contradicted by Cook County court data, but we'll get back to that a bit later.

The parallels between Pangea and payday lending are hard to ignore upon closer examination of what happens when the company takes its tenants to eviction court. To get a loan from a payday lender, customers typically have to sign lengthy, dense contracts that include mandatory arbitration clauses—this means they're giving up their right to sue the lender individually or as part of a class action

over things like unfair debt collection practices, hidden fees, or usurious interest rates. (In a 2015 Securities and Exchange Commission filing, Enova International acknowledged that attempted federal regulations of mandatory arbitration “could render the arbitration agreements we use illegal or unenforceable,” and that limits to their ability to require customers to sign away their rights to sue could spell steep legal expenses and have an “adverse effect” on profits.)

While Pangea has been sued dozens of times by tenants claiming unsafe living conditions or negligent management, those lawsuits—the vast majority of which have been dismissed—are not the main arena in which the company flexes its legal muscle. Instead, that happens in eviction court, where Pangea is notorious for “pay-and-stay” deals, in which tenants sign away their right to a trial—and with it, the ability to argue for withholding rent because of Pangea's inadequate building management.

The building in Austin where Eyevie McHenry lived had a lot of problems. Department of Buildings records indicate tenants complained about leaky ceilings, mice, roaches, and bedbugs once Pangea took over in 2015. When the *Reader* visited her in early March last year, McHenry, 30, was heating her one-bedroom apartment with the stove because the radiator wasn't working and

her maintenance calls had gone unanswered. She'd lived there for nearly a year with her fiancé and their small scruffy dog, but they hadn't bothered to get much furniture for fear of the mice eating through it. Squeals from inside the walls periodically interrupted our interview.

Despite these conditions—and despite the fact that they regularly heard gunshots outside—the rent was \$850. Not long after they moved in, in May 2017, her fiancé lost his job. Unable to pay rent in one lump sum, they'd bring the company a few hundred dollars at a time—though they knew they accrued nearly \$30 in late fees every month they didn't pay in full. For three months Pangea took the partial payments. McHenry showed the *Reader* the receipts they got from the company and said they were never told making partial payments put them at risk of eviction.

By her calculation she only owed Pangea \$100 at the beginning of September. But when she went to the office the property manager couldn't accept payment—the company had filed for eviction. In court Pangea's lawyers offered a pay-and-stay deal: she could stay in the apartment in exchange for sticking to a payment plan for her arrears and the ongoing monthly rent; if she didn't make her payments she agreed to an eviction judgment without a trial. Court records filed by Pangea indicate that on November 16 McHenry made a \$1,000

down payment toward her nearly \$3,000 debt (which included \$400 in court costs Pangea passes on to tenants when making such deals). Going forward, she agreed to pay \$930 for rent on the first of the month and \$323 toward her debt on the 15th of every month.

The deal seemed unfair—especially since her rent had been \$80 lower until then—but McHenry didn't have a lawyer and said she didn't know she could negotiate.

Over the next three months she paid Pangea \$4,759 for rent and back rent. But in February 2018 she was two days late on each payment. Though she said the company took her money, it still moved to evict her for violating the pay-and-stay agreement. (Pangea declined to answer any questions about McHenry's case.)

The day she returned to court it took all of two minutes for Judge David Skryd to issue an eviction order while mumbling something that made Pangea's lawyer, Sheldon Perl, chuckle. Neither of them addressed McHenry as she stood alone next to a “Defendant” sign taped to Skryd's bench. The courtroom was empty, the silence pierced by the whir of the Daley Center's HVAC. McHenry, who's petite with a round face, glasses, and long dreadlocks, wore a black puffer coat and crossbody purse with a plush heart-eyes emoji keychain.

“Good luck to you,” Perl said with a placid smile, handing McHenry a copy of the eviction order and shaking her hand. She looked over the sheet of paper, tears welling up in her eyes.

“They'll put their foot on your neck.”

—Pangea tenant Craig Williams

It said that she still owed the company nearly \$2,000. It was as though she'd hardly made any progress toward paying off her debt.

McHenry's case is typical for Pangea. It's impossible to tell from the court data how many of Pangea's 9,000 eviction cases have included a pay-and-stay deal because they aren't tracked in a uniform manner, but lawyers familiar with eviction court as well as the *Reader's* own court observations indicate that the company tends to offer tenants a legally binding payment plan on their first day in court. When I asked Goldstein why Pangea takes people to court if they're just going to make a deal, he said that tenants are “not willing to make that deal unless they know you're serious.” ➔

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It appears that this approach to the eviction process was developed by the company's first attorney and Goldstein's University of Illinois college buddy Tom Raleigh, who, since leaving Pangea in 2014, started his own practice to represent landlords in eviction court. (Raleigh declined to be interviewed.)

Once a tenant agrees to a pay-and-stay deal, the landlord has dibs on their wallets—whatever money they have is more likely to go toward rent first. If the tenant doesn't hold up her end of the bargain, the landlord can get an eviction order from the judge without having to go to trial and make legal arguments. Any defense the tenant might put up—like "I refuse to pay rent while my heating isn't working."—is moot in such an arrangement.

In contrast to Pangea, most Chicago landlords view eviction court as the last possible resort. It costs \$400 to file in Cook County (a price tag so high experts said it may be the reason Chicago's eviction filing rate is below the national average). Then it costs at least another \$600 to hire an attorney specializing in landlord-tenant law (Pangea's a rare landlord with in-house attorneys). Then it could take weeks or months for a case to be resolved. All the while the tenant isn't paying. By the time a case is heard by a judge, a landlord's patience is usually exhausted and they want their lawyers to play hardball.

Duane Ehresman, the west-side landlord, said he's adopted Pangea's approach to eviction court with the help of Raleigh's law firm. Whereas before he'd give tenants chance after chance to catch up on rent, now he's filing eviction cases as soon as possible. "By doing it this way, I send them to court, they work out an agreement with my attorney, and the court enters the [eviction] order and the order allows them to stay as long as they pay," he explained. "There's nothing nefarious about it, it's protecting everybody."

On the tenant side of the bar, Raleigh—and Pangea—have for years been seen as more benign adversaries precisely because of their preference for payment plans over immediate eviction. The concern, however, is that these deals aren't made in good faith because most tenants don't have a lawyer and may not understand what they're agreeing to. "When the tenant fails the [eviction] order is entered without much discussion," said Mark Swartz, executive director of the Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing. "The judges aren't reviewing the evidence." Often, he added, tenants agree to deals in cases when, had they gone to trial, the landlord would have likely lost.

46 blocks in East Chatham

- Building
- Pangea building
- Empty lot

- Since 2009, Pangea has:
- Invested \$20 million
 - Acquired 716 units in 36 buildings (11 were vacant, 19 were bank-owned, 12 had mortgages in default, two were short sales)
 - Filed 981 eviction cases

SOURCE: PANGEA, CITY OF CHICAGO, CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY



In court, the *Reader* observed members of the company's legal team (attorneys Perl, Jennifer Dean, and Elisabeth Ault and paralegal Jose Pantoja) address the gallery of tenants waiting for their hearings: "Does anyone here for Pangea still need to speak to an attorney?" Swartz, who's witnessed this too, said that kind of neutral phrasing can obscure the adversarial nature of the subsequent conversation. Indeed, McHenry said that during her first conversation with Perl, "I didn't quite understand that he was *their* lawyer."

When a tenant raises her hand, the paralegal or one of Pangea's lawyers take her into the hallway or a side conference room to strike the deal. Several tenants interviewed by the

Reader said they felt rushed to sign Pangea's offer; when they asked to see a copy of their ledger, in which the company tracks balances and payments, the lawyers wouldn't provide it. After the tenant signs, the lawyers do all the talking with the judge and set follow-up court dates to monitor the tenant's compliance with the deal. If a renter isn't in the room when the lawyers are ready to bring the day's stack of cases up to the judge, they'll almost certainly be evicted. (Though judges tend to accommodate landlords' attorneys when they're running behind, the same courtesy is rarely extended to tenants.)

Despite the pay-and-stay deals, 60 to 70 percent of the cases Pangea files every year

end with eviction orders—about average for cases countywide. A quarter of those orders are issued without the tenant present in court (this is what happened to Krystal Horton).

After an eviction order, most tenants will leave an apartment on their own, but those who don't will eventually be put out by the Cook County Sheriff's office. Deputies will come in a group of four, wearing black uniforms and flak jackets. They'll break down the door if no one answers their loud knocks or the property manager doesn't have the keys. If someone is inside they'll be escorted off the property. Then the officers will slap a neongreen "no trespassing" sticker on the front door.



A Pangea building in East Chatham was cited by the city for building code violations in October 2018.  TRAVIS ROOZÉE

The deputies won't remove people's belongings—they stopped doing that in Cook County years ago—but if a tenant re-enters the unit from that point forward they could be arrested. Tenants have to make arrangements with the landlord to come back to remove their property; if they don't, it's on the landlord to clear the unit.

Early one Tuesday morning last spring, teams of sheriff's deputies rode out for a day of enforcing evictions in South Shore. The 60649 zip code, which has more evictions than any other in Cook County, tends to make for their busiest days. Seven of the 76 scheduled evictions that day were at Pangea buildings. Deputies are of a positive mind about the company—to them, Pangea's buildings seem clean and they can always count on

someone from the company being on-site to sign all the required paperwork.

The first Pangea eviction was at a squat, mid-century building with empty storefronts on 75th Street, just east of Jeffrey. Four deputies trudged through a dingy hallway and past tacked-up notices about building rules, dos and don'ts to prevent pest infestation, and \$300 refer-a-friend advertisements. One of them knocked loudly. No answer. Because the workers on-site didn't have the keys, a deputy grunted and slammed a heavy, long-handled mallet against the door, again and again. But even after four, five, six echoing blows it refused to give. Finally, someone inside opened the door.

Words were quietly exchanged, then Deputy Michelle Mentz announced, her voice rising: "On the chair in the bedroom—weapon." As

a sergeant walked to the back of the apartment to retrieve the gun, the tenant and his girlfriend, both in their early 20s, sat on beige leather loveseats in the living room, their faces disoriented, sleepy. The sergeant emerged with a black 9 mm Glock in one hand and a 30-round extender clip in the other. The bullets rang as he emptied the clip into a metal pan on the disheveled kitchen counter. Mentz scrutinized the tenant's FOID card and radioed the office to check if the gun's serial number matched any stolen weapons. It came back clean.

The sergeant dismantled the gun and put the pieces into a foam-padded lockbox. He escorted the couple out of the apartment and, because the man didn't have a concealed carry license, brought the box to the trunk of their car. The deputies marveled at the fact that extender clips are still legal in Chicago, then loaded themselves back into their squad cars and drove off.

There were two Pangea evictions in a large courtyard building about a mile northwest, where the stairway was clean and well lit—revealing that someone hadn't bothered to complete repainting the walls from greige to white. More Pangea fliers decorated the entry—warning tenants of a \$25 monthly fee if they opted for a month-to-month rental agreement instead of renewing their lease, and a \$25 fine for "false heat calls" if maintenance has to inspect a unit "with working heat."

The first evictee wasn't home. A gray shag rug and red pillows were staged in front of the decorative fireplace in her sparse, sunny one-bedroom apartment; a few logs were carefully arranged in the alcove. On the built-in shelves there was a photo of a Black couple on their wedding day and pillows embroidered with mantras to "do good" and "never grow up." One of the deputies used the bathroom before the group stickered the door, then huffed up three flights of stairs to the other evictee in the building.

An officer pounded on the door, then they waited in silence. A rush of hot air and the smell of freshly baked cookies wafted into the hallway when a shirtless young man finally emerged. His thermostat was cranked up to 80, one of the deputies incredulously noted. "You can't pack bags and stuff," Mentz told the man, who pulled on a sweater before storming out. The apartment was bare but for a twin bed, a small kitchen table, and a couple of chairs. One of them was propped up under the back door handle.

Throughout the day the deputies saw worse places than Pangea's: apartments with broken walls and no kitchen appliances; buildings

with dark, filthy hallways and trash-strewn lawns. What came across in the Pangea units was scarcity. A scarcity of furniture, of food in the pantry, of plants or sentimental knick-knacks that fill up homes over time. It seemed like no one had lived in these units long enough to really get settled. Or that they'd owned so little they were able to get their belongings out in time to avoid the sheriff.

The deputies' last stop that morning was a two-bedroom in a Pangea building with a neatly trimmed lawn, near 71st and Ridgeland.

"We went around and met the tenants and asked them to fill out applications, asked them to start paying the rent, basically tried to filter out for people who are likely not to be evicted over time."

—Pangea founder Al Goldstein

Someone had moved out in a hurry. A broken camping chair stood alone in the middle of one room, a child's yellow bicycle lay sideways in the corner of another. In the kitchen, the hood light had collapsed onto the range. A finger painting hung partially attached to the living room wall. Underneath broad, impressionistic smears of blue, yellow, and green someone had neatly written "Noah" in black marker.

Goldstein told me that evictions are inevitable when buying distressed properties in bulk. Sometimes the buildings Pangea bought were vacant and boarded up, sometimes they had squatters, sometimes they were full of tenants who had been paying rent—but it wasn't clear to whom, how much, and for how long. Pangea refers to such buildings as "economically vacant."

"We went around and met the tenants and asked them to fill out applications, asked them to start paying the rent," Goldstein said, describing what would happen after the company took over. Pangea also created ➔

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an algorithm to screen new tenants “which basically tried to filter out for people who are likely not to be evicted over time.”

To hear him tell it, legacy tenants had to merely pay rent and comply with Pangea’s uncomplicated rules for being a “good person” and they were welcome to stay, or move to one of the company’s other properties while their building was rehabbed. Goldstein admits that in the beginning the company was often called into building court—but he said it was usually for issues created by the prior owners and occupants of the buildings. Yet Steve McKenzie, a longtime attorney for the city who’s brought cases against the company, said Pangea often ran afoul of permitting rules during construction and rehab. “We were finding too many times they were doing it wrong, making mistakes,” McKenzie said.

In a particularly egregious example, Pangea was sued by the state in 2010 for violating asbestos abatement laws during the rehab of a building in South Shore. The company ultimately settled, paying \$27,000 in fines to the state and \$18,000 to the city.

Nevertheless, McKenzie said that things improved over the years as Pangea’s managers got the hang of the building code and permitting procedures. “On the whole they’re not a headache,” he said.

Some tenants who’ve had to live through Pangea takeovers disagreed. In August 2014, for example, a man named Jose Bratley posted on the company’s Facebook page: “Just wondering if it’s normal for Pangea reps to go to a building they’re trying to evict people from without a court order to do so and remove residents names from mailboxes when people are still living there.”

Bratley elaborated when I spoke with him last summer. In 2014 he shared a two-bedroom apartment with brothers Robert and Willie Pye in a 28-unit building in North Lawndale. Unbeknownst to the tenants, the previous owner had gone into foreclosure. One day a notice arrived from Pangea offering the roommates \$500 to move out, Robert Pye later told me. Bratley said workers then came to the apartment to take measurements “and just acted like we were in the way.” Willie Pye recalled someone from the company trying to break the locks on their and a neighbor’s apartment while they were home. One day residents caught another person from the company scraping tenants’ names off the mailboxes, Bratley said.

The roommates said the building had issues before Pangea. The back porch was barely holding up and someone had even stolen

a radiator from the hallway. City records show that the building was in court for code violations. But it didn’t make sense to Bratley that someone would buy the building and want rent-paying tenants to leave when there were plenty of vacant properties in the area. Ultimately, the roommates found a new place in Austin. Robert Pye said it took weeks of following up with Pangea to finally get their \$500.

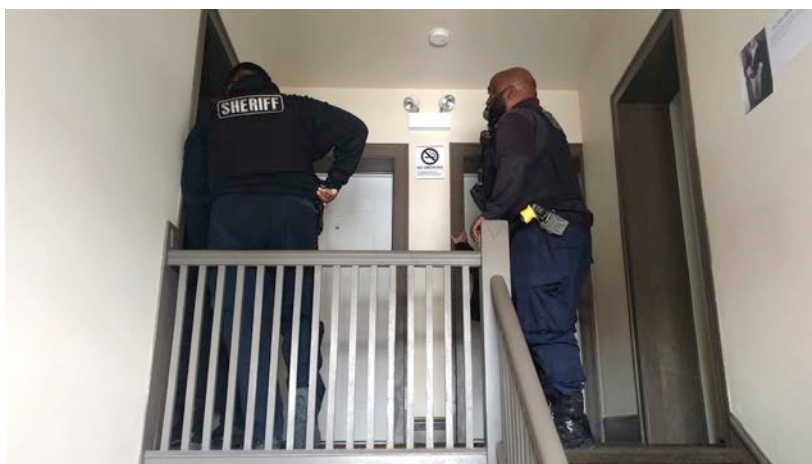
Goldstein and Pangea’s current CEO, Pete Martay, declined to answer questions about this particular situation. But “cash-for-keys” deals like the kind Bratley and his roommates described were common in the wake of the foreclosure crisis. They offered a faster, cheaper alternative to eviction court for banks who didn’t want to play landlord and new owners who wanted new tenants.

Luke Markewych, who began working as a property manager for Pangea in South Shore in late 2010, said the company was doing “a lot” of cash-for-keys deals. If legacy tenants wanted to stay with the company, they had to reapply and pass Pangea’s screening like anyone else. He added that the company would even offer cash for keys to get problem tenants out of a building after they’d rehabbed and released the units as a more expeditious solution than eviction court.

In the fall of 2013 the city enacted the Keep Chicago Renting Ordinance, prompted by reports of mass displacements from foreclosed apartment buildings. The law required new landlords to offer each tenant in good standing either an opportunity to stay in the building with rent increases capped at two percent per year, or to pay them \$10,600 to relocate.

Markewych left Pangea in August 2013 and couldn’t comment on the impact the KCRO had on Pangea’s practices. Pangea didn’t respond to a question about the KCRO.

Meanwhile, formal eviction proceedings against Pangea’s tenants climbed. Cook County court data shows that Pangea’s eviction filings had grown by 3,594 percent, from 36 in 2009 to 1,330 by the end of 2013. Pangea was now filing more than any other landlord in Chicago, even property management companies with larger portfolios in low-income neighborhoods. As the company has settled into its real estate holdings over the years, Pangea has continued to file a disproportionate number of cases in the city. Its filings declined by 28 percent between 2013 and 2016, and last summer Goldstein told me these numbers would continue to fall because the years of intense evictions, like those of intense building acquisition, were now behind them. Yet, court data obtained by the *Reader* this



Cook County sheriff’s deputies perform evictions at Pangea properties in South Shore in March 2018.  MAYA DUKMASOVA

winter tells a different story. In 2017 Pangea’s eviction filings climbed once again and broke 1,000 cases for the last two years.

When asked whether taking roughly one in six of their tenants to eviction court is a sign that the company’s tenant-screening algorithm isn’t working, Goldstein said that Pangea’s rent collections tell the real story:

“95 percent of rent charged in a given month gets paid.”

Goldstein reiterated that Pangea’s buildings are “beautiful, they’re well taken care of, the people living in them by and large are really happy.” He told me to “go spend time at 75th and Coles” and added that “if not for Pangea, the south side would not be what it is today.”

There are no Pangea buildings right at 75th, but farther south down Coles—past a patchwork of vacant lots, boarded-up buildings, and tidy homes—the block between 76th Street and 76th Place has three buildings with Pangea’s blue and lime-green signs. The company has often acquired buildings in clusters, opting especially for large brick courtyard buildings and those on corner lots.

Craig Williams, 55, has lived with Pangea since 2010—“too long,” he said with a chuckle, as he left his building on a sunny summer morning wearing jean shorts and a thick gold chain over his red T-shirt. The location is convenient, a short drive from work. And he could stomach the \$790 rent for his two-bedroom. But he said the quality of service has deteriorated.

He sighed. “You have to bitch,” he said, before the company fixes anything. He was tired of loud neighbors making his apartment smell like weed and of the burglaries in the building. It ticked him off when management banned barbecuing on back porches. Just the previous week, the power went out and it took a day to be fixed. (A tenant at another building around the corner told an identical story; in the last two years there have been news reports about Pangea’s lengthy delays in fixing heating, addressing mold, and restoring water service at other South Shore properties.)

But when it comes to collecting rent money, Pangea is aggressive, Williams said, describing neighbors’ complaints about the company’s collection practices. “They’ll put their foot on your neck.” Since Pangea bought the 38-unit building where Williams lives, it’s filed eviction cases against an average of nine tenants every year, court records show. In 2014 they took 17 people to court—nearly half the building.

It seems that high tolerance, rather than satisfaction with Pangea, has kept Williams here all these years. But recently and “completely out of the freaking blue,” the company started charging \$30 per month for water, he said, and “that is one of the reasons why I can’t wait to get the hell out of here.”

In *Evicted*, Desmond writes that low-income people looking for housing or work are often assumed to be “more or less ‘rational actors’ who recognize trade-offs and make clear choices.” Through his research, however, he saw people wear out from long, fruitless searches for decent apartments or jobs. The people he encountered could better be characterized as “‘exhausted settlers,’ who accept poor housing in a disadvantaged neighborhood or a dead-end or illicit job after becom-

ing depleted and disheartened from trying and trying and failing and failing.”

The journey from rational actor to exhausted settler is often shaped by age, health, access to resources, and knowledge of rights. People settle when there’s a scarcity of good housing options. Pangea—which Goldstein and Martay repeatedly cast as a white-hat operator in a market rife with slumlords and crooks—smooths the way with a comparatively forgiving tenant screening. Applicants need proof of income for only the last two months (and it only needs to be double the rent). Bad credit isn’t usually a problem. There’s also a move-in fee instead of a security deposit—although you never get that back, it’s only half a month’s rent, sometimes less, and easier to scrape together.

In Austin, 52-year-old Pangea tenant Lois Staples, who gets around in a power chair, said the bathroom door in her studio at 5501 W. Washington isn’t wide enough for wheel-

“They’re not screening their tenants enough, because they’re constantly moving in and out.”

—Pangea neighbor Ronald Hunt Sr.

chairs, and there aren’t any grab bars. The elevator in the 150-unit building frequently breaks down and her son has to help her up the stairs. (Department of Building records cite elevator maintenance problems at the property as recently as this month.)

But Staples said she won’t move because at least she’s not dealing with rats “knocking on the door,” like she was under prior management. Meanwhile, Quincy Miller, 33—another tenant in the building who uses a wheelchair—said that after just a few months in the building he decided he wouldn’t be renewing his lease.

Miller said he can’t maneuver his wheelchair into the laundry room because a post—apparently installed to prevent theft of the washers and dryers—obstructs the doorway. He described having to hoist himself up flights of stairs to his fourth-floor apartment using his upper body when the elevators are broken.

He worried about what might happen to him and at least six other tenants in wheelchairs if there’s a fire. A gregarious man who seemed to know everyone in the building, he said he’d heard tenants complain to Pangea’s workers about bedbugs, roaches, and mice, about overflowing toilets that take forever to fix. He’d seen frustrated neighbors break their lease and move out. (Soon after we met, Miller fell behind on his rent. He entered a pay-and-stay deal with Pangea but couldn’t keep up on his fixed Social Security Disability income. He was evicted a day before his lease was originally set to expire. He’d just qualified for a Section 8 voucher and was afraid he’d lose it with the eviction on his record, but a judge ultimately agreed to seal the case.)

Several commercial tenants interviewed had similar complaints. Anthony Scott, who runs the Shear Imagination barbershop in a Pangea building at Madison and Austin, said the company is the worst of the three landlords he’s had in 12 years. Pausing mid-haircut one afternoon, he told me that since 2012, Pangea has raised his rent from \$1,200 to \$1,400 and started charging for maintenance, garbage collection, and water. “They want us to pay for everything and they don’t want to do nothing.” Meanwhile, he sees the building deteriorate. He said his clients who live above the shop complain of trash in the hallways and rodents in the apartments. Scott said previous owners were accessible. But now, even though one of Pangea’s offices is right in the building, he has to route all his service requests through a call center and wait days for an answer.

Chawanya Hayes, who had owned a nail salon in the same building since the 90s, posted a frustrated message about Pangea on Facebook in 2014. She complained of maintenance delays and that her shop didn’t have air conditioning for two summers. In 2017 Hayes and her aunt, who ran a printing shop in the building, moved out. “It was totally offensive to be long time tenants and have to go around getting petitions signed by other tenants for change,” she told me in a recent text message.

Pangea’s neighbors in nearby buildings and single-family homes were generally keener on the company than tenants. In interviews throughout the south and west sides, they were mostly glad that vacant buildings that were once “drug houses” and eyesores had been revived. One exception was a homeowner living next to a 42-unit Pangea building two blocks south of Craig Williams on Coles Avenue.

“Don’t let me get started about Pangea!” Ronald Hunt Sr. said, rolling his eyes. He was thrilled when Pangea bought the abandoned,

squatter-filled property in 2012. Hunt even let the company use his backyard when they were rehabbing it and said Pangea promised to fix the landscaping destroyed by construction. He said it never happened. (Pangea declined to comment.)

He offered a tour of his property, pointing out a couch and mattress dumped in the back of the building after an eviction, bags of trash he said Pangea tenants have tossed into his backyard, and pools of yellow grease in the gangway that the same tenants poured from their kitchen windows. He said he’d been complaining to Pangea’s workers and calling the company’s office about these problems to no avail. “They’re not screening their tenants enough, because they’re constantly moving in and out.”

Is Goldstein aware of the research on long-term consequences of eviction on individuals and communities? “I’m not sure,” he said. He told me that the effect of an eviction filing on a person’s record “is probably not that bad” if they don’t actually get evicted. “What’s the ideal scenario?” he asked with a hint of irritation. “To let people live in units for free or to have them be problems for all the folks around? I think that’s a great hypothetical question, but there’s no actionable answer to that question.”

Of course, there are plenty of actionable answers. Some big and some small. Some might require the overthrow of capitalism as we know it, others for Pangea to do extra paperwork.

If tenants face eviction because they don’t have enough money, the solution is for rent to be cheaper, or for people to have more money. Setting aside sweeping policy changes like universal basic income or rent control—neither of which are likely to become a reality in Chicago anytime soon—there are already government programs in place that attempt to alleviate the burden of rent. Section 8, also known as the Housing Choice Voucher program, provides federally-funded subsidies to tenants in the private rental market. And, according to Chicago Housing Authority records, Pangea already takes more tenants with vouchers than any other landlord in the city—some 1,500 of the CHA’s 46,000 vouchered households live in the company’s units. Additionally, both the city and state have homelessness prevention programs designed to help tenants experiencing financial emergencies avoid eviction. Pangea, however, doesn’t take homelessness prevention funds.

Lynette Barnes is a senior program manager at All Chicago, a nonprofit that admin- ➔

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istered \$1.5 million in state homelessness prevention grants in the city last year, helping nearly 1,000 households stay current on rent or utilities. Pangea is the only landlord she's ever known who refuses to take the money—up to \$2,500 per household. “It’s just crazy,” she said. The *Reader* heard a similar story from a Pangea tenant who said he’d qualified for \$1,400 in assistance from the city’s homelessness prevention program (which is funded through HUD) but that a Department of Family & Support Services case worker warned him Pangea wouldn’t accept it.

Goldstein didn’t have an explanation when I asked why the company wouldn’t take the grants. Pangea’s head of marketing, Arun Das, followed up in an e-mail: “Pangea will accept payments from all rental assistance programs as long as they don’t restrict our legal remedies or rights under the terms of the rental agreement.” To get the emergency grants, landlords have to agree to suspend any pending eviction proceedings.

The federal government’s standard for housing affordability is that rent and utilities (or a mortgage) shouldn’t consume more than 30 percent of a household’s income. In Chicago, however, more than 70 percent of the poorest tenants (for example, a four-person household with a yearly income of less than \$25,400) pay more than half of their income toward rent. According to the DePaul Institute for Housing Studies, the gap between the supply and demand for affordable housing in the city stood at 119,000 units as of 2016, and it’s grown since the recession. Given these conditions, thousands of tenants will inevitably face eviction every year, and advocates are attempting to make the legal process more fair.

Chicago’s landlords tend to view eviction court as a venue stacked in tenants’ favor because of the high case filing fees and the city’s Residential Landlord Tenant Ordinance that, at least on paper, guarantees tenants protections—like the right to withhold rent if the landlord doesn’t address maintenance problems. However, the *Reader*’s analysis of court records show that 60 percent of tenants who wind up in court are evicted and the majority of them don’t have legal representation. This is confirmed by a new database of city eviction records created by the Lawyers’ Committee for Better Housing and rolled out this week—while about 80 percent of landlords have lawyers, about 80 percent of tenants don’t. Nearly a third of eviction cases are tried on the first day a case comes before a judge—meaning thousands of tenants are evicted the first time they come to court.



“Don’t let me get started about Pangea!” said Ronald Hunt Sr., the owner of a red house next door to one of the company’s apartment buildings in South Shore.

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Legal aid groups and tenant advocates have successfully pushed for the installation of recording equipment in the Daley Center’s five eviction courtrooms. It’s supposed to be up and running by the end of June. Without it, litigants have no meaningful way to appeal judges’ decisions since proceedings aren’t transcribed. This won’t necessarily change the power imbalance between landlords and tenants, but advocates hope it will keep judges in check and ensure fairer case outcomes. As the *Reader* reported in 2016, a lack of recording turns a courtroom into a “black box” where judges have been observed blatantly violating procedures and misinterpreting the law.

Other efforts are underway for “plain languaging” court documents like summonses and judges’ orders so they make more sense to average people. Last year, after much debate,

“They want us to pay for everything and they don’t want to do nothing.”

—Pangea commercial tenant, Anthony Scott

the Illinois Supreme Court’s Access to Justice Commission changed the name of the court order judges issue to tell tenants they’ve been evicted from “order of possession” to “eviction order.”

Meanwhile, in Springfield, House Bill 4760 proposes automatically sealing every eviction case filed, unsealing it only if a tenant is actually evicted. The bill was introduced last year

after a report by Housing Action Illinois and LCBH found that tenants who were filed on but never evicted continued to have difficulties when applying for apartments years later. Credit agencies also collect information on filings—including the debt landlords claim—even if the case was eventually dismissed or the final money judgment entered against a tenant was lower. Multiple tenants interviewed for this story complained that, even though they were never evicted by a judge, Pangea showed up as outstanding debt on their credit reports. Automatic sealing could clear the records of about 6,500 Chicagoans per year, facilitating housing mobility and integration.

Municipal governments elsewhere have taken more ambitious steps to grapple with evictions. New York and San Francisco have enacted ordinances guaranteeing a lawyer to every tenant in eviction court. But even barring that, existing legal resources, particularly mediation, can help tenants get a fairer shake in pay-and-stay deals. The Center for Conflict Resolution currently mediates about 100 eviction cases in Chicago per year—60 percent of these negotiations end in an agreement, of which 97 percent are fulfilled by both parties. Since mediation is provided by a nonprofit, it doesn’t cost taxpayers a penny, and yet, in observing more than 100 hearings in Chicago’s eviction courtrooms, the *Reader* heard a judge or other court staff tell litigants about the availability of this service no more than a couple of times.

Much research remains to be done to understand how the effects of eviction ripple through Chicago neighborhoods. Goldstein and Martay declined to discuss whether evictions constitute a business challenge for Pangea, but the company seems to be thriving despite all the losses involved in putting tenants out. Eviction court judges have awarded the company \$11 million in judgments over the

last decade—money that landlords stand almost no chance of collecting after tenants are evicted. When it comes to landlords in poor communities, evidence suggests that the profit margins from rents could be high enough for eviction to not constitute a serious threat to the bottom line.

In their January paper, Desmond and Wilmer write that the perception of the financial risk involved in renting to the poor appears to be out of proportion with the reality. They also discuss policy interventions that could tackle the eviction crisis—from rent control to insurance for protecting landlords in case a tenant defaults—but note that “public policies aimed at easing families’ rent burdens should be grounded in a firm understanding of property owners’ business practices.” This understanding is hard to come by since landlords, particularly those who provide unsubsidized housing, aren’t overseen by any government agencies. While the state attempts to protect tenants from having to live with lead paint or bedbugs, there are currently no limits to how much landlords can profit from rents, no tracking of landlords’ losses, and no way to know whether tenants in any particular neighborhood housing market are being subjected to unreasonable exploitation. It’s hard to have an “actionable answer” to any problem in an information vacuum.

Krystal Horton is the first to admit that she was late to eviction court—and that things could have turned out differently had she not been. But she’d never been to the Daley Center before that June morning in 2016. She didn’t know there could be long security lines, that the childcare center doesn’t take babies, that being even a few minutes late could mean she’d be evicted. She said she wished she’d had a better understanding of the legal system and knew how and when to assert her rights.

In the wake of her eviction from Pangea’s building that August, Horton’s life took many turns for the worse. She was suddenly homeless and went to several shelters. With an 11-year-old and a toddler she worried about safety. She found the shelters dirty and wasn’t comfortable sleeping in the open. She was terrified of bedbugs. Her son was starting sixth grade that September and she needed to figure out where to enroll him, so finally she decided to move back to Homewood, her hometown in the south suburbs where she still had friends and relatives, including her mother.

But she didn’t return home right away because she and her mother weren’t on very good terms. “She thought I made poor choices

in relationships.” Besides, she added, “there was a kind of shame” in coming home because of an eviction.

Horton applied for apartments but said she was repeatedly rejected because of the eviction on her record. She and the kids bounced around friends’ and relatives’ homes and sometimes slept in the car. She worried about where her son would do his homework every night. She saw him struggling with all the upheaval.

“It was very emotional for him because he felt he had to be the man of the house, he thought he had to protect me and my daughter,” Horton said. In a matter of days his world had been turned upside down, from having his own room and enjoying home-cooked meals to “having to sleep on cots, spraying down our furniture, having to eat food out of paper bags, seeing others pulling clothes out of bags.” He was angry with her for a while “because he thought it was my fault. He said, ‘I don’t want this to ever happen to us again.’”

By October, things were looking up. Horton landed a full-time job at the Amazon warehouse in Joliet and was able to rent an apartment in a small four-unit building across the street from her son’s new school. The rent was \$975—36 percent higher than what Horton had been paying Pangea. Though she’d had a difficult on-and-off relationship with her daughter’s father, things had briefly improved and she was pregnant again.

Then, in November, car trouble hit again. One day she even abandoned it on the highway shoulder and walked for two and a half hours to work. She didn’t want to give Amazon a reason to fire her. The job came with benefits, and as her due date neared she’d need maternity leave. But in March, she said she was fired for spending too much time “off task” as a result of frequent bathroom breaks (these kinds of dismissals are a documented phenomenon at Amazon’s warehouses). Her car was repossessed soon after.

Just when Horton thought she could get through the next month with her tax refund, she learned that the state of Illinois was garnishing it because she hadn’t responded to a notice to sign up for a student loan consolidation and had gone into default. She said she never received the letter, probably because it had gone to her Pangea address. Meanwhile, her building was sold and she fell behind on rent. Her new landlord filed an eviction case against her 364 days after Pangea first took her to court. Horton was then nine months pregnant and preeclamptic.

After ruling against her at the beginning of July, the judge gave her an extra month to

leave so she wouldn’t be homeless with her newborn daughter. By then, she’d scraped together enough money to pay the landlord back but she said he wasn’t interested. (Reached by text the landlord, who lives in Texas, denied knowing Horton.)

Unemployed, with her credit wrecked, her car gone, two evictions on her record, no insurance, three kids, and a custody battle erupting with the father of her daughters, Horton moved in with her mother. It hasn’t been easy. She and her mom still butt heads, being a single mom is tough, and work isn’t always steady. But she said she wanted to share her experiences with the *Reader* so that other people facing similar challenges know that they’re not alone. In retelling her story, Horton sometimes laughed as she chronicled one misfortune after another. She turned serious when I asked how she was able to stay in high spirits while revisiting all that’s befallen her.

“When life happens and you have no control over it, the most you can do is sit back and take a deep breath and laugh it off to keep from crying. To keep from screaming,” she said. “At the end of the day I still have children looking at me. I still have to keep moving, life still goes on.” She said that it can feel like drinking is helpful, but the problem with drinking is that “it costs more money. What costs free? Nothing but a good laugh.”

Two years after her second eviction, Horton still lives with her mom. She’s working to repair her credit, and she recently landed a full-time job as a CNA and is studying for a bachelor’s degree in nursing. Horton still wonders where she’d be if Pangea hadn’t evicted her. She remains resentful that, as she sees it, she never got her day in court on that case. But she also understands the situation from Pangea’s perspective—her unit wasn’t generating income.

She’s anxious about looking for apartments again, knowing she’ll likely face a gauntlet of rejection. She wants to save up enough money to buy her own place, maybe even a two-flat with a second unit she could rent out. “I feel like I can be a better landlord than what I’ve experienced,” she says. “Eviction is something I wouldn’t wish on my worst enemies.”

 @mdoukmas

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Lawyered up

Attorneys improve tenants’ chances of avoiding eviction—but not by much.

By MAYA DUKMASOVA

A new database of Chicago eviction records published by the Lawyers’ Committee for Better Housing shows that between 2010 and 2017, on average, 79.8 percent of landlords in eviction court had a lawyer, while only 11.2 percent of tenants did. (This confirms the *Reader’s* prior independent reporting on landlord and tenant representation.)

Overall, 60 percent of the eviction cases filed end with a judgment against a tenant, but when tenants have legal representation their chances of staying housed increase substantially: 17 percent fewer tenants with attorneys get evicted than those without. And the type of attorney tenants hire matters too. While about half of tenants who hire a private attorney end up being evicted, only a quarter of those represented by free legal aid lawyers do. Though they achieve better case outcomes for tenants, on average, legal aid attorneys—



Sheriff’s deputies will break down a door if no one answers when they come to evict and the landlord doesn’t have keys.  MAYA DUKMASOVA

usually from nonprofit organizations that handle a wide variety of civil and criminal cases—appeared in fewer than 475 eviction cases per year between 2010 and 2017. In that period, the number of cases in which legal aid lawyers appeared dropped by nearly 60 percent. LCBH is among the Chicago-based organizations that provide free legal advice and lawyers to tenants. Others include:

LAF

Focus on tenants with housing subsidies such as Section 8 vouchers

CABRINI GREEN LEGAL AID

Focus on evictions arising from allegations of criminal activity

ACCESS LIVING

Focus on tenants with disabilities

CENTER FOR DISABILITY AND ELDER LAW

Focus on tenants with disabilities and seniors

METROPOLITAN FAMILY SERVICES (LEGAL AID SOCIETY)

Represents low-income tenants

UPTOWN PEOPLE’S LAW CENTER

Focus on formerly incarcerated and north side tenants

CHICAGO VOLUNTEER LEGAL SERVICES

Also represents low-income landlords

CENTER FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Free mediation services for tenants and landlords

COORDINATED ADVICE & REFERRAL PROGRAM FOR LEGAL SERVICES (CARPLS)

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METROPOLITAN TENANTS ORGANIZATION

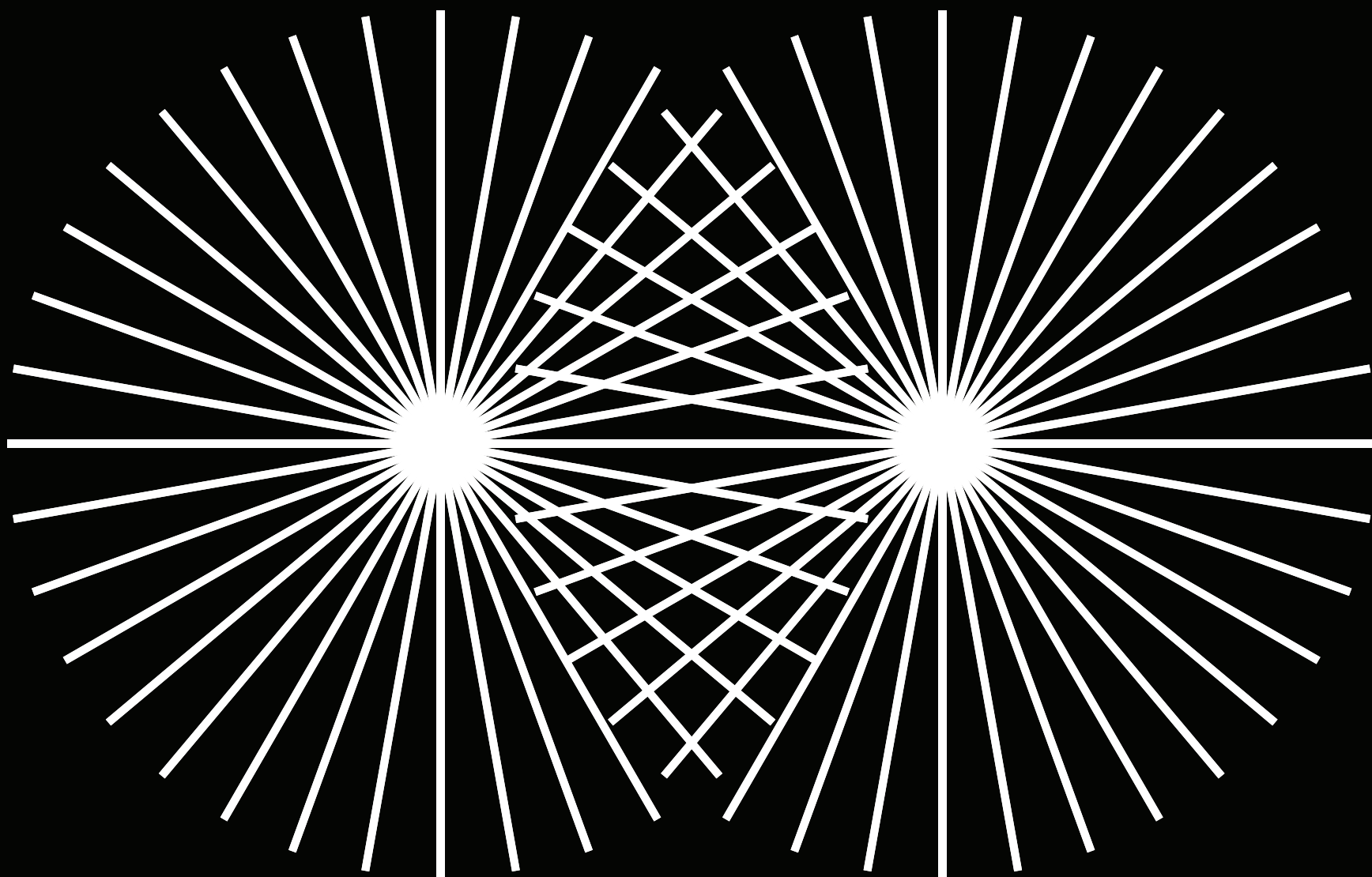
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The Undeniable Sound of Right Now MICHAEL BROSILOW

REVIEW

Hang the DJ

The Undeniable Sound of Right Now enables an aging rockist with dying dreams.

By KERRY REID

In his 2004 *New York Times* essay “The Rap Against Rockism,” Kelefa Sanneh argued, “A rockist is someone who reduces rock ‘n’ roll to a caricature, then uses that caricature as a weapon. Rockism means idolizing the authentic old legend (or underground hero) while mocking the latest pop star; lionizing punk while barely tolerating disco; loving the live show and hating the music video.”

Change that to “hating the DJ” and you’ve got the central cultural conflict at the heart of Laura Eason’s *The Undeniable Sound of Right Now*, a 2015 play by the Lookingglass Theatre ensemble member now in a local premiere at Raven. Set in 1992, the story covers the last days of a revered Chicago bar that, in its heyday, showcased everyone from Stevie Nicks to the Clash. But that was then, and DJ culture and raves are “right now.”

Eason comes by her own local rock cred honestly; in the 90s, she was a singer, songwriter, and bassist for Tart, a band she formed with fellow Lookingglasser Joy Gregory. Eason’s written about the Chicago music scene

before. In 2009, the Side Project premiered her play *Rewind*, based loosely on the 1996 suicide of Material Issue’s Jim Ellison.

THE UNDENIABLE SOUND OF RIGHT NOW

Through June 16; Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, Sun 3 PM; Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark, 773-338-2177, raventheatre.com, \$43-\$46 (\$38-\$41 seniors and teachers, \$15 students and active military/vets).

The only things dying here are the dreams of aging rockist Hank (Jeff Mills), who’s run his eponymous bar for 25 years but resents being treated like a nostalgic afterthought. Especially by the ambitious DJ, Nash (Henry Greenberg), who is making moves on his daughter, Lena (Lindsay Stock). His landlord’s son, Joey (Casey Morris), is another whipper-snapper nipping at Hank’s heels (and leering at Lena’s everything). Joey is taking over his dad’s affairs and sees no reason to honor the no-lease handshake arrangement Hank had with his old man for decades—not when ➔

WEST SIDE STORY

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the once-blighted neighborhood has become hot and there is big money to be made from developers.

In the wake of the threats to the Hideout with the Lincoln Yards TIF deal, Eason's show, directed here by Northlight artistic director BJ Jones, should still carry contemporary weight. But there's a museum-piece quality to both the script and the production that keeps it from resonating as fully as it could.

Much of that is because, while Lena is positioned by the end of the play as the future of Chicago music, we mostly see her in relationship to Hank and Nash, the two men pulling her in seemingly different aesthetic directions. There's also Toby (Christopher Acevedo), the "nice guy" music nerd who works as Hank's assistant and still carries a resentful torch for Lena from a short-lived relationship in the past.

But if Lena has dreams of her own, we don't really hear about them. She speaks vaguely of trying to remake Hank's into a place that would meld his rockist vision with Nash's party scene. But it's frustrating that we don't see Lena's own visions, especially in the thick of the riot grrrl era. Her unconventional up-bringing in Hank's world seems, paradoxically, to have led her to the conventional role of pleasing the men in her life.

Hank is the worst caricature in alternative music—a cantankerous older man who still harbors romanticized notions of what REAL rock is, dammit, but can't wrap his mind around the revolutionary nature of new aesthetic developments. "Music is some kind of magic and you have to love it and respect

it. You just can't use it," he proclaims self-righteously at one point—as if the rock legends he idolizes didn't use the mainstream music industry to build very comfortable lives for themselves.

Eason flirts with the inherent racialized nature of rockism vs. DJ culture (though Nash is white) but doesn't really address it, other than allowing Hank to offer grudging praise to house music pioneer Frankie Knuckles as virtually the only DJ worthy of being considered an artist. It's a credit to Mills that he comes off more as a charming grump than a self-pitying dinosaur. But it's also frustrating that he won't take anyone else's advice before it's too late.

The women holding him up—Lena and his ex-wife, Bette, who came back to help raise Lena after the girl's junkie mother took off—carry the weight of looking after Hank. Dana Black's witty, wise, and compassionate Bette is the big beating heart of the show. She may have finally found some peace and quiet in the 'burbs after years of living above the noise and smell of Hank's, but she's still in the bar every night, sharing a beer and her hard-won wisdom with her ex.

As a valentine to the music scene of the early 90s, Eason's play is delightful. Jeffrey D. Kmiec's graffiti-smeared bar walls recall the old Club Dreamerz in Wicker Park, and Lindsay Jones's sound design offers ear candy of the era. But like Hank himself, it's a play torn between wallowing in the old stories and trying to fumble its way into a vision of what an undeniable cathartic music scene should be—right now. **R**

 @kerryreid

NOW PLAYING

Amicable differences

A world premiere earns a friendlier reception as it chugs along.

Ross Compton's world premiere one-act dramedy ends as a wholly different play than the one it starts as, and that's for the better. What begins as a perfunctory mash-up of staple theater school writing exercises—The Park Bench Play, The Existential Limbo Play, The Male Playwright's *The Ghosts of Girlfriends Past* Personal Spec-Fic—evolves into a pretty sophisticated multisubject character study, even if it doesn't totally stick the landing.

A postgrad (David Hartley) on a mostly empty suburban Metra train runs into a friend—a Mountain Dew Code Red-chugging townie schlub (Ian Gonzalez-Muentener) whose enthusiasm to reconnect gets a cool reception. Mysterious cosmic forces add new commuters one by one, each with a contentious connection to at least one of the other riders.

Compton seems to have absorbed the note somewhere along the writing process that—despite how it feels when you're in your youth—the dissolution of weeks and months-long romantic relationships is not the end of the world, and one man hashing it out with his exes is not sustainably compelling drama. About halfway through, the story's focus expands into richer territory, like the relationship between two sisters (Melanie McNulty, Abby Walburn) and the tribulations of a dancer (Walburn). By the end, director Tony Lawry's production brings out some pretty compelling performances, including from fifth-grader Izzy Schafer, who has a lot put on her young shoulders and rises to the occasion. **—DAN JAKES** *AMICABLE* Through 6/2; Thu 7:30 PM, Fri-Sat 8 PM, Sun 3 PM, Theatre Above the Law, 1439 W. Jarvis, 773-655-7197, theatreatl.org, \$22.

A plague o' too many devices

Ionesco's *Killing Game* gets too busy with the dying.

Eugène Ionesco's *Killing Game*, first produced in 1970, will always be relevant—which paradoxically explains its dramatic ineffectiveness. It's set in an unnamed town visited by a vicious, unaccountable plague. Death roams the streets unfettered (personified in this Red Orchid production as a towering, black-clad night terror lumbering purposefully across the stage throughout the evening). As tens of thousands drop without warning every week, the besieged living respond in all-too-familiar ways: blaming the victims for their immorality, carelessness, or ignorance; insisting that wealth, science, religion, or government can save everyone; cowering before authoritarian officialdom or fomenting insurrection against it.

Of course, this plague is pure metaphor, every society's perceived existential threat du jour. And since we humans always need to believe that threat exists, preferably wielded by those we're already primed to hate, the play naturally reflects any moment of social upheaval. But Ionesco is largely content to demonstrate the predictable ossification of deeply entrenched political, religious, and moral divisions through a series of flashpoint scenes. The broad absurdist tropes he characteristically deploys further simplify everything.

Director Dado takes a scattershot approach to the text, employing various devices—video, face masks, hand

puppets, campy costuming, even kitchen utensils—in nearly every scene, creating little opportunity for ideas to develop or deepen. Understandably, her game cast, featuring several of the city's finest actors—each awkwardly carrying a stylized artificial limb for 100 minutes—never find a way to settle into this unsettled stage world. **—JUSTIN HAYFORD** *KILLING GAME* Through 6/23; Thu-Fri 7:30 PM, Sat 3 and 7:30 PM, Sun 3 PM, Sat 6/8 3 PM only, A Red Orchid Theatre, 1531 N. Wells, 312-943-8722, aredorchidtheatre.org, \$30-\$40.

'Shroom for improvement

Adam Strauss's *The Mushroom Cure* follows his search for a cure for OCD through gray-market pharmaceuticals.

After undergrad, I spent a dreary year in social work. I was terrible at it for a number of reasons, but most of all, I was spending my days providing care and counsel while completely denying my own rocky headspace. The signs were there. I'd spent years bombarded with crippling mood swings and impulsive tendencies. A few months after leaving the field, I received a bipolar II diagnosis. Naming the problem was revelatory; the liberation offered by therapy and medication—Lamictal and Fluoxetine—still feels like someone handed me superpowers.

I know what it's like to be desperate for clarity and control, which is why Adam Strauss's one-man show *The Mushroom Cure* rocked me. Strauss, who graduated from Brown with a BA in psychology, runs a darkly comedic sprint through the forest of his OCD diagnosis, over the hills of falling in love and the valleys of using gray-market psychedelics to "cure" himself.

With a background in stand-up, Strauss unleashes the gallows humor and self-deprecation I'd expect from a self-aware set. But the most transcendent parts of the show are when he gets ugly. It's difficult to hear how poorly he treated his female partners and the emotional labor he demanded of them. But Strauss never begs for forgiveness. A follower of the 12 Steps, he seems to be using his art to practice eight and nine: make a list of all persons you've harmed, and become willing to make amends to them all; make direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

The feminist in me doesn't want to let him off the hook too easily, but I also have to acknowledge the restorative justice and vulnerability involved in Strauss's onstage confessions. If you've ever been to a 12 Step meeting, consider this one of the most compelling personal accounts out there. This isn't a show for everyone—especially if you've been harmed by someone out to make amends—but I consider it a realistic depiction of nonlinear healing and recovery. **—KT HAWBAKER** *THE MUSHROOM CURE* Through 6/9; Thu-Sat 8 PM, Sun 3 PM; also Sat 5/18 2:30 PM; no performance Thu 5/16, Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln, 773-404-7336, greenhousecenter.org, \$29-\$35, \$19 students, seniors, teachers, military, and industry.

Too many hooks

The Secret of the Biological Clock follows a scattershot conceptual recipe.

If I've learned anything from *The Great British Baking Show*, it's that you should always acknowledge the bravery and hard work behind any given bake—even when someone forgot to preheat the oven.

The Secret of the Biological Clock is one such

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Single Black Female © MARCUS DAVIS

underbaked confection, though it is clearly a labor of love: playwright Andie Arthur blends junior detective heroes like Nancy Drew with crises of adulthood. The scrappy cast give it their best. Eleanor Dawson (Kelly Levander) is a teenage sleuth turned 30-something journalist who moves into her childhood home with her husband, mystery author Peter Wilder (Mark Tacderas). Peter is the brother of Eleanor's late crime-fighting comrade, Robert (Lance Spencer), whose disappearance still haunts the couple. Meanwhile, a local Eleanor-fangrrrl named Jasmine (Aziza Macklin) is convinced that Robert is her father and wriggles into the lives of Eleanor and Peter.

While there is ample ground for intrigue, the show suffers from too many enticing hooks and zero commitment to any of them. In a few scenes, it aims for film noir pastiche; then there are moments of *Degrassi*; next, a racially problematic spin on Andy Griffith and Mayberry. Because they serve too many genres at the same time, the characters depend on cliché. Somewhere in the story, there is a compelling thread about a woman reclaiming the mysteries of her childhood—but that requires less plot and slower character development.

The show's real mystery was in its set design. My partner, a professional theater carpenter, squirmed throughout as structures rattled and put the actors at undue risk. Would Peter make it across the platform? Would the handrail stay in place? What kind of liability insurance does this company have? In that respect, I was on the edge of my seat. —KT HAWBAKER *THE SECRET OF THE BIOLOGICAL CLOCK* Through 6/2; Thu-Sat 8 PM, Sun 2 PM, Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport, 773-935-6875, athenaeumtheatre.org, \$27-\$32 (\$17-\$22 students/seniors).

RR Black women and the City
“Ain’t nobody want to hear us,” say *Single Black Female*’s stars.

Part *Sex and the City* parody and all celebration of Black female culture, *Single Black Female* at Congo Square Theatre is an incredibly different and joyous stage play. Playwright Lisa B. Thompson sets out to lift up the lives of middle-class single Black American women, a demographic largely bypassed by mainstream media in favor of voyeuristic and exploitative narratives of downtrodden poor single mothers.

“Single Black Female: Ain’t nobody want to hear us,” proclaim the show’s two stars, Tiffany Addison and Ginneh Thompson, jubilantly dancing down the stairs through the audience to the stage, demanding to be seen and heard. Set inside a boutique, the show guides us through a hilarious series of monologues, vignettes, poems, and scandalous stories. Though the pacing of the show ebbs and flows, Addison and Thomas are comedic forces to be reckoned with. Their vibrant characters, ridiculous expressions, and comic delivery wring huge and frequent belly laughs from the audience. In the quieter moments, they both express acute vulnerability, pain, and longing that any viewer—Black, female, or otherwise—can identify with.

Black women as a demographic are hardly a monolith, and the show reflects this reality. Paradoxically, it feels simultaneously dated and progressive as it tackles a wide range of topics, including the search for love and a husband, monogamy, motherhood, sex, queer relationships, and polyamory. Director TaRon Patton does a wonderful job easing the sharp transitions to and from heavier subjects, such as racism and misogyny, through playful and silly energy and an incredibly banging soundtrack of Black women’s power anthems. —SHERI FLANDERS *SINGLE BLACK FEMALE* Through 5/19, Thu-Fri 7:30 PM, Sat 3 and 7:30 PM, Sun 3 PM, ETA Creative Arts, 7558 S. South Chicago, congosquaretheatre.org, \$25-\$35.

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All Is True

REVIEW

Sex, love, and the Bard

All Is True is like a titillating celebrity exposé that just happens to be set in Jacobean England.

By **ANDREA GRONVALL**

There's a bit of a nod-nod, wink-wink irony in the title of Kenneth Branagh's latest exploration of the genius of William Shakespeare. *All Is True* refers to the alternate title of *Henry VIII*, the Bard's penultimate play, which was being staged in 1613 at London's Globe Theatre when the playhouse caught fire and burned down mid-performance. That fire is a documented fact, one of the relatively few available about the historic figure who may be the most celebrated poet and playwright of all time, but yet left precious little evidence from which later generations could reconstruct his personal history.

When Branagh decided to direct a film about the last three years of Shakespeare's life, the actor/producer's mandate to his friend and screenwriter Ben Elton was to find a way into a tale that would hang on what little is

known of the dramatist's retirement to home and family in Stratford-on-Avon. The result is a period piece that feels oddly contemporary, like a titillating celebrity exposé that just happens to be set in Jacobean England. You want sex scandals? Got it. Unrequited love? Check. Courtroom escapades? All here, if not all (exactly) true.

Branagh, who shot to movie stardom with his production of *Henry V* in 1989, is in his element. After helming six adaptations of Shakespearean plays—plus *A Midwinter's Tale* (1995), a movie about a troupe of actors staging *Hamlet* in the provinces—he is more than up to the task of playing the Bard himself, imagining him as a world-weary, bedeviled “great man,” home at last after 20 years mostly spent entertaining both elites and the masses in London.

Distance as much as time has muffled the

grief he's carried since the death years ago of his only son, Hamnet, but now that Will has returned to the family manor, his wound festers, spilling contagion into a brimming pool of domestic strife. His younger daughter, Judith (Kathryn Wilder), is a vituperative spinster; his older daughter, Susanna (Lydia Wilson), is married to a strict Puritan physician (Hadley Fraser) who sexually neglects her, perhaps because he has secretly contracted “the pox”; and Will's wife, Anne (Judi Dench), is still frosty after the publication back in 1609 of his sonnets, which the local gossips view as proof of his affair with some unknown party.

This all sends Shakespeare moping around the Warwickshire countryside and his garden, like a 17th century version of Kurt Wallander (coincidentally, there's also a mystery surrounding Hamnet's death that he doggedly unravels). When he's in town, self-righteous hypocrites heap scorn upon him for his humble origins and a slander lawsuit involving Susanna. The only saving grace comes in a visit from his longtime patron, Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, played by Ian McKellen in the film's strongest sequence. As Will pours his heart out, he slides into Sonnet 29 (“When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes . . .”), leveling a penetrating gaze at the noble benefactor who may or may not have been the “Fair Youth” to whom the first 126 sonnets were addressed. But Will's ardor is deflected by Wriothesley's reply: the earl's own recitation of the same sonnet, a wiser, more nuanced rendition that leaves the poet with even more regret.

Around this point I began to wonder in what direction Branagh was leading us, his portrait of Shakespeare up until then having been hardly flattering. Will's three spirited women at home may have the guts to challenge his narcissistic preoccupation (or, more charitably, his artistic dedication), but he doesn't hold back putting them in their place. For someone who generously wrote so many triumphant, glowing female characters, he buys into the misogyny of his era: he's the breadwinner and the genius, he reminds them. They're there at his largesse, their function being to produce male heirs, and at the end of

the day, they remain his property. And property is indeed very important to him; he now lives in the town's second-grandest house, having pulled himself up out of his father's impecunious disgrace, and spent a handsome sum for a coat of arms (that nonetheless has not erased tortured childhood memories nor stilled wagging tongues).

Maybe the film's best clue to Shakespeare's middle-age crisis surfaces in a brief but very amusing scene where a starstruck fan shows up on his doorstep to ask breathlessly, “How did you know?” “Know what?” Will replies, warily. “Everything,” the young man gushes.

Well, in real life Shakespeare didn't know *everything*, at least not firsthand. What he didn't know, he could imagine. He is not believed to have ever traveled outside England, yet he wrote characters so psychologically complex, and conjured locales so ancient or exotic, it was as though he had. His grasp of history was sound, but his instincts for self-preservation were equally strong, and he was not above reinterpreting inconvenient facts in order to stay in favor with the royal court. Then there's also the matter, not addressed in the film, of the shared or contested authorship of some of his work—there's no mention, for instance, that his collaborator on *Henry VIII* (aka, *All Is True*) was John Fletcher, who succeeded him as house playwright for the prestigious acting company the King's Men. And of course, as scholars over the centuries have discovered, the Bard was a master thief, appropriating and/or refining snippets of lines or even entire plots devised by other writers, either dead or (sometimes) contemporary.

Today, we might call such a creative act “sampling,” or an “homage.” You could say that throughout his entire career Branagh has been paying homage to Shakespeare. The actor once said in an interview that he feels Shakespeare is “very life-enhancing,” adding, “I don't have any kind of conventional religious belief and I find Shakespeare's a tremendous source of inspiration, because there's no situation that I've come up against that somehow hasn't been described in those plays.” In *All Is True* Branagh and Elton do what the Bard did himself: take something—be it someone else's idea, an historical fact, or a recent event—and mash it up with original material, to fashion an entertainment that feels real. As Shakespeare says in the film, not without a little snark, “I've never let the truth get in the way of a good story.” **A**



NOW PLAYING

RR Ash Is Purest White

About two-thirds of the way into *Ash Is Purest White*, the latest triumph by Chinese master Jia Zhang-ke, the heroine, Qiao (Zhao Tao, Jia's regular leading lady), meets a strange man on a train heading north from the central province of Hubei. Qiao was recently released from prison after serving a five-year term; after tracking down her boyfriend, who didn't bother to meet her upon her release, she discovered that he had taken up with another woman while Qiao was in jail. Qiao intends to return to her hometown of Datong, though she's not sure what she'll do there. Feeling rudderless, she listens to the strange man with rapt attention, as if looking for a sign for what to do with her life. He says he's headed to an area near the border with Inner Mongolia, where he plans to set up a tourism company that will take people to places where others have claimed to see UFOs. Qiao lies and claims that she's seen a flying saucer herself, perhaps to earn the stranger's trust. He concludes the spiel about his prospective business by saying, "The bottom line is, we're all prisoners of the universe." —**BEN SACHS** 136 min. *Fri 5/17, 3:30 and 7:30 PM; Sat 5/18, 3 and 7:30 PM; Sun 5/19, 4:45 PM; Mon 5/20, 7:30 PM; Tue 5/21, 6 PM; Wed 5/22, 7:45 PM; and Thu 5/23, 6 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

Betty

Heralded by some as the triumphant comeback of Claude Chabrol, though I prefer to see it as one of his better second-degree efforts—and considering how many of his features have never crossed the Atlantic, it's hard to rank it more definitively than that. Much of this 1992 film is recounted piecemeal in flashbacks as the title heroine (Marie Trintignant), a young wife recently abandoned by her husband for infidelity, recalls her past to an older woman (Stephane Audran). As is often the case with Chabrol, moral ambiguity is just the other side of mise en scene, and the storytelling is pretty fluid. In French with subtitles. —**JONATHAN ROSENBAUM** 103 min. *Mon 5/20, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

Climax

After making several movies that resembled bad acid trips (*I Stand Alone*, *Irreversible*, *Enter the Void*), Gaspar Noé has made a movie about people experiencing a bad acid trip; the results may be described as thematic overkill. This takes place in the mid-1990s at a shuttered woodland boarding school where a couple dozen dancers (a mix of straight, gay, and bisexual men

and women) rehearse their latest routine. One night someone spikes the dancers' sangria with LSD, and the group devolves into madness and violence. As usual Noé sets an ambience of sensory overload with strobe effects, dizzying Steadicam shots (some of them lasting more than ten minutes), and a near-constant thumping on the soundtrack. Yet it all feels emptily show-offy and monotonously shrill this time around—maybe it's because, in juggling so many characters, Noé isn't able to humanize the drug's disconcerting effects by tying them to any one person's experience. Regardless, the various attempts at shock value (with scenes involving self-mutilation and abortion) seem downright desperate. In English and subtitled French. —**BEN SACHS** R, 95 min. *Fri 5/17-Sat 5/18, midnight. Music Box*

RR N Grass

Perhaps the quintessential Hong Sang-soo film, this short black-and-white feature eschews narrative for a series of pointed observations on the South Korean writer-director's favorite subjects: creativity, flirtation, passive-aggressive one-upmanship, drinking, and leisure time. Hong's muse Kim Min-hee stars as an aspiring writer who spends an afternoon and evening hanging out at a coffee shop and eavesdropping on strangers' conversations. All of the strangers are either actors or screenwriters, and most of the conversations concern creative stagnation or suicide (the film is awfully melancholy in spite of its breezy surface tone). Hong raises the possibility that the discussions are simply going on in Kim's head and that each encounter represents a new draft of the same story, but this isn't a movie to be puzzled over like the director's *Hill of Freedom* (2014) or *Yourself and Yours* (2016). The distinction between the real and the imagined is ultimately moot—for Hong's self-regarding yet sympathetic characters, all activity is the province of the mind. In Korean with subtitles. —**BEN SACHS** 66 min. *Fri 5/17, 2 and 6 PM; Sat 5/18, 5:30 PM; Sun 5/19, 3:15 PM; Mon 5/20, 6 PM; Tue 5/21, 8:30 PM; Wed 5/22, 6:15 PM; and Thu 5/23, 8:30 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

RR N John Wick: Chapter 3 – Parabellum

Superior exercises in action-movie formalism, the *John Wick* movies evoke everything from Fritz Lang's silent thrillers (in their imagining of vast, underground criminal networks) to Gene Kelly's musicals (in their inventive and breathless fight choreography) to Brian De Palma's self-aware genre pastiches (in their allusions to high art

Ash Is Purest White

and the way they veer close to parody). This third entry in the series picks up about an hour after the second one ended, when the international assassins' guild placed a \$14 million bounty on the head of Keanu Reeves's unflappable killing machine. As in the film's predecessors, the plot barely matters; it's simply an excuse for director Chad Stahelski and company to stage one remarkable action set piece after another. Some of the more impressive ones take place in New York's Chinatown, a Moroccan palace, and the lobby of a luxury hotel. With Halle Berry, Laurence Fishburne, Anjelica Huston, and Ian McShane. —**BEN SACHS** R, 143 min. *Block 37, ArcLight, Century 12 and CineArts 6, Chatham 14, City North 14, Ford City, Galewood Crossings, Showplace ICON, 600 N. Michigan, Webster Place 11*

RR Losing Ground

This low-budget 1982 drama was one of the first features directed by an African-American woman, but it's much more than a historical footnote. Formally and intellectually ambitious, it moves daringly between Bergmanesque psychodrama and probing conversations on philosophy, race, and religion. A black philosophy professor at a New York college (Seret Scott), working on a paper about "ecstatic experience," starts to reevaluate her life and realizes that for years she's lived without passion. Writer-director Kathleen Collins charts the character's emotional breakdown subtly and perceptively, never drawing easy conclusions

about her life. Bill Gunn gives a powerful performance as the woman's husband, an arrogant abstract painter; his unpredictable, deeply sympathetic work recalls such John Cassavetes films as *Faces* and *A Woman Under the Influence* and makes for a compelling frisson with the cerebral script. With Billie Allen and Duane Jones. —**BEN SACHS** 86 min. *Wed 5/22, 7 PM. Northwestern University Block Museum of Art FREE*

The Matrix

The Wachowskis turn their attention to metaphysical SF: Keanu Reeves discovers that the universe (i.e., America and environs) is run by computers that use human beings as batteries for bioelectrical energy, and that he's living not in 1999 but roughly two centuries later; Laurence Fishburne enlists Reeves to lead a revolt staffed by a small multinational crew (including kick-ass heroine Carrie-Anne Moss). This is simpleminded fun for roughly the first hour, until the movie becomes overwhelmed by its many sources—*Blade Runner* (rainy and trash-laden streets), *Men in Black* (men in dark suits with shades), *Star Wars* for mythology, *Die Hard* for skyscrapers, *Alien* for secondary characters and decor, *Superman* and *True Lies* for stunts, and *Videodrome* for paranoia. There's not much humor to keep it all life-size, and by the final stretch it's become bloated, mechanical, and tiresome. —**JONATHAN ROSENBAUM** R, 136 min. *Wed 5/22, 7:30 PM. Beverly Arts Center*



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Mercury in Retrograde

This observant, nuanced indie opens with three Chicago couples poring over their horoscopes in a local paper during a getaway at a Michigan cabin. The astrological period of the title promises upheavals and self-reflection, and as the weekend progresses, the stars don't lie. The men (Jack C. Newell, Shane Simmons, Kevin Wehby) have the funniest moments, haggling over the finer points of Frisbee golf and using a drunken discussion of Dashiell Hammett's *The Glass Key* to skirt their deeper feelings; the women (Alana Arenas, Roxane Mesquida, Najarra Townsend) provide the soul-baring needed for the film's bittersweet denouement. Michael Glover Smith directed his own script. **—ANDREA GRONVALL** *2018 105 min. Smith attends the screening. Sat 5/18, 7 PM. Chicago Filmmakers*

RR Penguin Highway

In this irresistible Japanese anime, a solemn fourth-grade science wiz with an intense curiosity about the world in general—and his busty dental hygienist in particular—is thrown together with her over the summer when large flocks of cute penguins suddenly invade his quiet inland town. The mystery of their appearance deepens when he learns it's she who's summoning them, although she can't explain how. Making his feature debut, 30-year-old director Hiroyasu Ishida confidently adapts Tomihiko Morimi's bestselling coming-of-age novel, gracefully segueing from the hero's prepubescent urges to reflections on nature and impermanence, and illustrating brief digressions on the space-time continuum and Einstein's general theory of relativity with panache. It's a heady brew, gorgeous to behold, and wise about children and the places in their hearts. In Japanese with subtitles. **—ANDREA GRONVALL** *118 min. Sat 5/11, 9 PM and Mon 5/13, 7 PM; English-dubbed: Sun 5/19, 4:30 PM. Music Box*

The Phantom of the Opera

Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical version of the Gaston Leroux novel and movie standby has grossed more than \$3 billion worldwide since it opened in London in 1986, but I doubt that I've missed much. Teen romance and operetta-style singing replace the horror elements familiar to moviegoers, and director Joel Schumacher obscures any remnants of classy stage spectacle with the same disco overkill he brought to *Batman Forever*. Arty trappings like black-and-white framing segments and floating candelabras (like the ones in Jean Cocteau's *Beauty and the Beast*) don't help, though the spirited players—Gerard Butler, Patrick Wilson, Miranda Richardson, Minnie Driver, Simon Callow, Ciaran Hinds, and Emmy Rossum (Sean Penn's daughter in *Mystic River*)—do what they can. **—JONATHAN ROSENBAUM** *PG-13, 143 min. Tue 5/21–Thu 5/23, 10:30 PM. Logan*

N Photograph

After two satisfying 2017 English-language dramas, *The Sense of an Ending* and *Our Souls at Night*, director Ritesh Batra returns to his native India for this low-key, exquisitely shot love story. Fans of his 2013 breakthrough, *The Lunchbox*, will easily spot the similarities between that feature and this one: the lonely, repressed male protagonist; the younger pretty woman who yearns for agency over her own life; their class divide; and their meeting by coincidence in Mumbai, a city so densely populated (22 million and counting) that finding one's soul mate there is a near miracle. Nawazuddin Siddiqui stars as an itinerant street photographer barely

eking out a living; Sanya Malhotra is the shy accounting student leery of her middle-class parents' matchmaking plans. After snapping photos of her outside a popular tourist spot, he passes her off as his fiancée to please his worried, fragile grandmother (Farrukh Jaffar), but she's sharper than she looks. Batra's fusion of a melancholy romanticism with a raw, edgy urban milieu is persuasive, but this too-languidly-paced film lacks the emotional payoff of *The Lunchbox*, and rising newcomer Malhotra is not yet in Siddiqui's league. In English and subtitled Hindi and Gujarati. **—ANDREA GRONVALL** *PG-13, 110 min. Landmark Century Cinema*

N Poms

Movies about and starring women over 60—and, let's face it, 50 and 40—are not only scarce but also scarcely as complex or revelatory as they should be. For the most part, these films are schematic farces, designed to land bankable TV distribution deals first and mollify older audiences second. *Poms* is the latest of these hokey crowd-pleasers for the AARP set, starring Diane Keaton as a weary New Yorker who relocates to a sleepy retirement village in Georgia. Hijinks ensue as the cynic meets her free-spirited neighbor (Jacki Weaver) and the two iconoclasts form a cheerleading squad comprised of other residents (including Pam Grier and Rhea Perlman), much to the distaste of the snooty village president (Celia Weston). Director Zara Hayes, to her credit, mixes some dark humor and blistering social commentary into this otherwise frothy cocktail of pratfalls and platitudes. Keaton basically plays her adorable, ditz self again, though with a dash of saltiness that, in the context of a movie about aging, is a balm. **—LEAH PICKETT** *PG-13, 91 min. Cinemark Tinseltown USA, Classic Cinemas Charlestowne 18, Classic Cinemas Cinema 12, Classic Cinemas Elk Grove, Classic Cinemas York, Ford City, Glen Art Theatre, Lake Theatre*

still/here

The midwest's great cities can be alienating, and this black-and-white essay (2000) articulates disturbed relationships between people and landscapes through imagery and editing. Filmmaker Christopher Harris

suffuses the blighted north side of Saint Louis with a powerful melancholy, lingering on rubble-strewn lots, decrepit buildings, and empty streets, while footsteps and a continually ringing phone on the sound track suggest lives interrupted by the devastation. Holes in a movie theater marquee are powerfully evocative, but even more impressive is the film's sprawling, almost chaotic form: its calculated incompleteness truly matches the subject, and Harris's long takes imply—not without a hint of anger—that the ruins of his hometown are eternal. **—FRED CAMPER** *2003 60 min. Showing with a selection of short films by Harris. Harris attends the screening. Fri 5/17, 7 PM. Logan Center for the Arts* **FREE**

RR Summer Palace

Director Lou Ye was banned for five years from making films in China because of this one, his fourth feature, which didn't make it past the government censors. And it's hard to imagine how this landmark, taboo-breaking feature could, with its volatile mix of copious sex and oppositional politics. The film follows Yu Hong (played by vibrant new actress Hao Lei) and her girl- and boyfriends from the time they're admitted to a top Beijing university just before the violent 1989 democratic uprising, through the uprising's aftermath, and into their long, somewhat anticlimactic drift toward adulthood in Berlin, Wuhan, and Chongqing. Lou's mobile camera captures the flushed energy of the faces and bodies of beautiful youths in love with all the verve and commitment of the early French New Wave. In Mandarin and German with subtitles. **—SHELLY KRAICER** *140 min. 35mm. Thu 5/23, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

RR War and Peace

Sergei Bondarchuk's kitschy, epic 1967 adaptation of the Tolstoy novel is the most expensive movie ever made, and though it can be bombastic and mind-numbing, it's often lively and eye filling. The balls and battle scenes are monumental, and Bondarchuk (who plays the bumbling Pierre, as Orson Welles would have in the 40s if he'd realized his own version with Alexander Korda) moves his camera a lot, incorporating some expressive 60s-style flourishes. Even at 415

minutes (over an hour shorter than the Soviet release) this rarely suggests the vision behind the set pieces or populist polemics; Tolstoy's feeling for incidental detail is more evident in non-Tolstoyan films like *The Leopard* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*. This is a landmark in the history of commerce and post-Stalinist Russia, but not cinema. If you'd like to merely sample it, try parts one and three. With Lyudmila Savelyeva (graceful as Natasha), Vyacheslav Tikhonov (suitably morose as Andrei), and more than 100,000 extras. In Russian and French with subtitles. **—JONATHAN ROSENBAUM** *434 min. Showing in four parts. Part 1: Fri 5/17, 2 PM; Sat 5/18, 2:30 PM; and Mon 5/20, 6:30 PM. Part 2: Fri 5/17, 4:45 PM; Sat 5/18, 5:15 PM; and Tue 5/21, 6 PM. Part 3: Sun 5/19, 3 PM; Tue 5/21, 8 PM; and Wed 5/22, 6 PM. Part 4: Sun 5/19, 4:45 PM; Wed 5/22, 7:45 PM; and Thu 5/23, 6 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

N Wine Country

Amy Poehler directs and stars in this rowdy gals-trip comedy for Netflix that on paper seems unassailable. Poehler and real-life pals Maya Rudolph, Paula Pell, Ana Gasteyer, Emily Spivey, and Rachel Dratch play longtime friends who assemble in Napa Valley to celebrate Dratch's character's 50th birthday; in the process, they reexamine their own lives and fraying connections to each other. Tina Fey drops in as the crusty, "edible soap"-selling owner of the buddies' vacation house, as do Jason Schwartzman and Cherry Jones as a dippy van driver/paella cook and humorless tarot card reader, respectively. All the pieces are in place for a sidesplitting, heart-tugging romp à la *Bridesmaids*, yet they fail to click. In her feature directorial debut, Poehler has some trouble with comedic timing and shot composition, while the narrative, cowritten by Spivey and Liz Cackowski, relies heavily on exposition and anvil-like metaphors. The tarot card scene and another that finds the women at a millennial-run art gallery are highlights, though neither these spiky moments nor the delightful sextet at the film's center can save the project from being, overall, a curious letdown. **—LEAH PICKETT** *R, 103 min. Netflix*

ALSO PLAYING

All Creatures Here Below

A desperate young couple at the end of their financial rope flee across country after the wife abducts an infant. Collin Schiffi directed. *91 min. Fri 5/17, 7 and 9 PM; Sat 5/18, 3, 5, 7, and 9 PM; Sun 5/19, 1, 3, 5, and 7 PM; and Mon 5/20–Thu 5/23, 7 and 9 PM. Facets Cinematheque*

The Beach Bum

Harmony Korine directed this comedy about a stoner (Matthew McConaughey). With Snoop Dogg, Isla Fisher, Stefania LaVie Owen, Jimmy Buffett, Zac Efron, and Martin Lawrence. *R, 95 min. Sat 5/18, 7 and 9:30 PM; and Sun 5/19, 4 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

The Biggest Little Farm

John Chester directed this documentary about his and his wife's attempt to establish a small sustainable farm near Los Angeles. *PG, 91 min. Century 12 and CineArts 6, River East 21*

An Evening With Gregg Bordowitz

Filmmaker and SAIC professor Gregg Bordowitz hosts a screening of his own 1993 documentary *Fast Trip, Long Drop* (55 min.), about his learning that he's HIV+ and coming out to family, and Marlon Riggs's 1989 documen-

Photograph



FILM

tary Tongues Untied (55 min.), about Riggs trying to reconcile his being black and gay and the double prejudice he faces. *110 min. Bordowitz attends the screening. Fri 5/17, 7 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

Chicago Critics Film Festival

This edition of the annual festival presented by the Chicago Film Critics Association includes 24 undistributed features, two shorts programs, and a retrospective screening of Ridley Scott's *Alien* in 70mm. *At Music Box Theatre. For a full schedule, visit chicagocriticsfilmfestival.com. Fri 5/17-Thu 5/23.*

Cold of Kalandar

Mustafa Kara directed this 2015 Turkish/Hungarian film about a poor Turkish villager who dreams of getting rich through far-fetched schemes. In Turkish with subtitles. *132 min. Sat 5/18, 7:45 PM, and Thu 5/23, 8 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

The Dark Side of the Rainbow

A screening of *The Wizard of Oz* paired with Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon* album as the soundtrack. *102 min. Fri 5/17-Mon 5/20, 11 PM. Logan*

A Dog's Journey

Gail Mancuso directed this sequel to *A Dog's Purpose* (2017) about the relationship between a dog (voiced by Josh Gad) and the humans in his life. With Dennis Quaid, Marg Helgenberger, Betty Gilpin, and Kathryn Prescott. *PG, 108 min. ArcLight, Century 12 and CineArts 6, City North 14, Ford City, River East 21, Galewood Crossings*

Finishing School

A rich boarding school girl (Frances Dee) falls for a poor medical student (Bruce Cabot) in this 1934 romantic drama directed by George Nichols Jr. and Wanda Tuchock. With Billie Burke, Ginger Rogers, and Beulah Bondi. *73 min. 35mm archival print. Wed 5/22, 7:30 PM. Northeastern Illinois University*

Naila and the Uprising

Julia Bacha directed this partly-animated U.S./Palestinian hybrid documentary about Palestinian activist and

resistance fighter Naila Ayesh. In English and subtitled Arabic and Hebrew. *76 min. Sat 5/18, 1 PM. Northwestern University Block Museum of Art F*

Okaeri Makoto

Shinozaki directed this 1995 Japanese drama about a man who becomes concerned by his wife's increasingly strange behavior. In Japanese with subtitles. *99 min. 35mm. Sun 5/19, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

Rubber Coated Steel & Watching the Detectives

A program of two short experimental documentaries: Lawrence Abu Hamdan's 2016 Lebanese/German film *Rubber Coated Steel* and Chris Kennedy's 2017 Canadian film *Watching the Detectives*. *57 min. Kennedy attends the screening. Fri 5/17, 7 PM. Northwestern University Block Museum of Art*

Rust Never Sleeps

Musician Neil Young directed this 1978 concert documentary about his show at the Cow Palace in California. *116 min. 35mm archival print. Thu 5/23, 9:30 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

Sharing Makoto

Shinozaki directed this 2014 Japanese dramatic thriller about a psychology professor and a drama student whose lives connect through the student's dreams about the 2011 earthquake and nuclear disaster in Japan. In Japanese with subtitles. *111 min. 5/19, 8:40 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

The Sun Is Also a Star

Ry Russo-Young directed this teen romance about a science student whose family is threatened with deportation and the the young man who comes into her life. *PG-13 ArcLight, Century 12 and CineArts 6, Chatham 14, River East 21, Galewood Crossings*

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**L7, Le BUTCHERETTES**

Tue 5/21, 7:30 PM, Metro, 3730 N. Clark, \$26.50. 18+

MARINA CHAVEZ

PICK OF THE WEEK

Grunge greats L7 return with the new *Scatter the Rats*

AS A SERIOUS YOUNG GRUNGER, I was determined to turn over every mossy Seattle-sounding rock. In addition to the big boys (though we all knew Pearl Jam were poseurs), I was a fan of sub-poppin' bands including Skin Yard, Green Magnet School, and the Fluid. The scene wasn't all hairy dudes, but few of the gnarly lady bands really thrilled me. L7 were a different story. The foursome's second album, 1990's *Smell the Magic*, seemed to have it all: hilariously snarky lyrics, style to spare, and crunchy, catchy tunes (especially the fist-pumpin' single "Shove"). When I saw L7 play Cabaret Metro in June 1991 with locals D.O.P.E. and Mama Tick (anyone remember them?), my awe only grew. They had tons of energy, and they'd already begun playing material off their breakthrough 1992 LP, *Bricks Are Heavy*, which featured the borderline hit "Pretend We're Dead." With that album, L7 polished up their uber-rockin' anthem game (though they kept their signature self-deprecating aesthetic), and the buzz-band rotation they earned on MTV made them look like the "next Nirvana" all the record labels had been hunting for. Guitarist-vocalist Donita Sparks was also a super-charismatic front woman who didn't give anything resembling a fuck: she once dropped her pants during a live TV performance, and at the

1992 Reading Festival, she retaliated against a trash-tossing crowd by throwing her used tampon (which AOL music site Spinner called "one of the most unsanitary souvenirs in alt-rock history"). L7 would tour with the likes of Nirvana, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, the Beastie Boys, and Faith No More, and they were even the subject of their own pseudo-documentary, 1998's *The Beauty Process* (directed by former Nirvana bassist Krist Novoselic). In 2001 the band finally took a break, but by the time a proper doc about the band dropped in '16, L7 had become tour monsters all over again, hitting festivals on both sides of the Atlantic in summer '15. Their seventh album, *Scatter the Rats*, came out May 3 via Joan Jett's Blackheart label. The single "Burn Baby" is two and a half minutes of their trademark chugging riffage and snarly commentary (this time about the record industry), with a hooky chorus that would make the Breeders' power-poppin' hearts flutter. L7's reunion lineup is the same classic crew that came together in 1988—Sparks, bassist-vocalist Jennifer Finch, guitarist-vocalist Suzi Gardner, and drummer Demetra Plakas—so this should be one fun slammin' mosh pit of a gig. Just watch out for UFFOs—unidentified flying feminine objects.

—STEVE KRAKOW

SATURDAY 18

CHICAGO OPEN AIR See also *Sunday*. *System of a Down* headline; Ghost, Meshuggah, Beartooth, Code Orange, Knocked Loose, and Vein open. 2 PM, SeatGeek Stadium, 7000 S. Harlem, Bridgeview, \$69.50-\$129.50. **ALL**

After taking a hiatus in 2018, Chicago Open Air is back for a third edition. The two-day festival celebrates the legacy of heavy metal, and each night's headliner is one of the biggest bands in the genre—both of whom have kept fans eagerly waiting for new music for more than a decade. The first day of the fest wraps up with a set from Armenian-American circus-prog legends **System of a Down**. It's been a full 14 years since the group released their most recent record, *Hypnotize*, but they've been active on and off in the interim. When they do come together onstage, their explosive combination of spazz metal and old-world mysticism can still make audiences go berserk. It's been almost as long since Sunday-night headliners **Tool** released their most recent album, 2006's *10,000 Days*, but unlike SOAD, the LA dark-prog four-piece have been promising a new LP pretty much every single year since then. With an aesthetic that seems like a hybrid of King Crimson's knotty *Discipline* and Pink Floyd's grim *Animals*, Tool make brainy metal but have paradoxically become notorious for their fan base of mouth breathers (front man Maynard James Keenan has described them as "insufferable" and "retards"). A couple summers ago the band started adding a new instrumental track, "Descending," to their set lists. Then last week, at the Welcome to Rockville Festival in Jacksonville, Florida, they finally performed their first full-on new song since *10,000 Days*, and as fans clamored to watch the resulting videos in the days that followed, the band officially announced a new album, due out August 30. "Invincible" is classic Tool—creeping, complex, slithering, and growing minute by minute. And as always, the music is anchored by the eight-armed drumming of Danny Carey and draped with Keenan's pensive, soaring vocals. —LUCA CIMARUSTI

INDIAN, IMMORTAL BIRD, BLOODIEST
8:30 PM, Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, \$12. 21+

You won't find many tighter showcases of Chicago underground metal bands than tonight's bill, headlined by the reclusive Indian, who've emerged from hibernation to blast the Empty Bottle with their raw, nihilistic doom (in advance of two festival dates). Indian play so rarely these days that their presence alone makes this show a can't-miss occasion, but tonight (and at Northwest Terror Fest in Seattle) they'll get a run for their money from sludgy, crusty up-and-comers Immortal Bird. Four years in the making, the band's second album, *Thrive on Neglect* (out in July on 20 Buck Spin), is a great leap forward from its impressive predecessor, 2015's *Empress/Abscess*. Immortal Bird navigate a variety of subgenres with battering beats, wasp-swarm guitars, and vicious audacity. The swampy breakdown in "Vestigial Warnings" and the beautiful angular motif of "Avolition" are just a few moments that suggest perfection is within the group's reach. On the stag-

MUSIC



Pedro the Lion
 RYAN RUSSELL

geringly dense “Anger Breeds Contempt,” producer Dave Otero keeps every element in the arrangement filthy yet audible beneath the roar of vocalist Rae Amitay (who’s also the drummer in Thrawsunblat). Rounding out tonight’s bill are Bloodiest, one of the greatest—if not only—experimental-metal roundtables in the city. —**MONICA KENDRICK**

SNARKY PUPPY *Alina Engibaryan opens. 8 PM, Riviera Theatre, 4746 N. Racine, \$40. 18+*

Merging elements of funk, jazz fusion, rock, international music, and jam-band fare—plus undeniable groove and melody—Snarky Puppy has emerged as an eminent name in crossover jazz. Formed in 2003 and led by bassist Michael League, the large-scale ensemble is on the road this spring in support of its 12th album, the new *Immigrance* (GroundUp Music). A sprawling studio production full of trumpet, sax, synths, flutes, strings, electric organ and piano, and funky rock instrumentation, it displays just as much eclecticism and proficiency as its predecessors, but this time the band takes a more direct approach, curtailing some of its impulses toward intricacy. Opener “Chonks” features six minutes of warbling, overdriven keyboard- and horn-stoked funk before closing out with a filthy rock groove. Similarly, “Bigly Strictness” radically shifts from dense, straightforward funk rock (the track includes more than ten types of percussion instruments from around the world) into a spacey, spiraling keyboard run. “Xavi,” the first single and longest track, epitomizes the band’s more traditional jazz-jam collision, channeling Mahavishnu Orchestra as much as Medeski Martin & Wood. *Immigrance* is a dense, nimble album of compelling melodies and masterful performances—and throughout 2019, Snarky Puppy will release bonus tracks from its recording sessions. —**SCOTT MORROW**

KATIE TOUPIN *Abigail Lapell opens. 7 PM, Schubas, 3159 N. Southport, \$15. 18+*

As the keyboardist of Indiana roots-rock group Houndmouth, Katie Toupin was mostly in the background. But when she got a turn at singing, such

as on the band’s 2012 single “Houston Train,” she was mesmerizing. Her voice is sharp, harsh, and perfect—think Iris Dement with more swagger. Listening to that track, you had to wonder why she wasn’t performing on her own. Sure enough, she left Houndmouth in 2016 and swapped her keys for a guitar as the leader of her own band. Last year she released her first solo EP, *Moroccan Ballroom*, which doesn’t quite live up to the promise of “Houston Train.” Toupin’s songwriting is hit-or-miss; the up-tempo “Shake Baby” is poppy, grating, and ill-suited to her vocal timbre. But when she connects, she’s a powerhouse. Album highlight “Love Ain’t Giving Up,” recorded in a single take, is a stripped-down tune built on acoustic guitar and quiet piano—a low-key approach that gives Toupin a lot of space to weight her lyrics with pathos and world-weary hope (“You don’t got to be alone in your silence”). Her live performance of the old blues “Nobody Knows You When You’re Down and Out” is even better, filled with personality, off-hand bitterness, and an easy swing. Though Toupin hasn’t quite found her groove yet, she’s worth listening to as she looks for it. —**NOAH BERLATSKY**

SUNDAY19

CHICAGO OPEN AIR *See Saturday. Tool headline; the Cult, Gojira, In This Moment, Fever 333, Black Dahlia Murder, and Alien Weaponry open. 2 PM, SeatGeek Stadium, 7000 S. Harlem, Bridgeview, \$69.50-\$129.50. 18+*

PEDRO THE LION *John Vanderslice opens. 7:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 1807 S. Allport, \$25-\$32. 17+*

In January, Pedro the Lion released their first album in 15 years, *Phoenix* (Polyvinyl), though in some ways it enjoys that distinction in name only. Anyone who’s followed Pedro the Lion front man David Bazan since the long-running indie-rock group hung it up in 2006 knows that he’s continued to record similarly tender, thoughtful music, often tapping into his extensive network for new collaborators. He’s released this material under a few ➔

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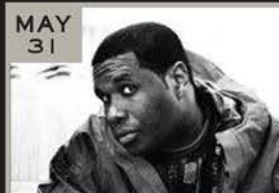
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MAY 18 GREEKS & GRADS

MAY 18 A DIFFERENT VIBE

MAY 19 HYDE PARK HANDMADE

MAY 19 “MAKE DAY PARTIES LIT AGAIN”: A TAURUS CELEBRATION

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MUSIC



continued from 36

different names: Headphones, Lo Tom, and (most frequently) his own. But in 2017, Bazan announced plans to bring back his best-known band, and he's using the resuscitated project to look into the past; *Phoenix* is the first of what's allegedly going to be a five-part series of Pedro albums that focus on different places where Bazan lived during his formative years. He's long been based in the Seattle area, but he spent his first 12 years in Phoenix, Arizona. Now 43, Bazan can recall his life as a six-year-old with great detail and emotional complexity. With thoughtful prose and vulnerable vocal melodies, he navigates the divide between his childhood and his adult self with critical distance as well as empathy—and the band's driving, lithe performances seem to push toward the future, suggesting that such meditations on the past can fuel critical personal growth in the present. On "Yellow Bike," Bazan makes revisiting memories of riding his childhood bicycle feel as important as it must have for his younger self to grab those handlebars for the first time. —LEOR GALIL

SÆUNN THORSTEINSDÓTTIR 8:30 PM,
Constellation, 3111 N. Western, \$15. 18+

Cellist Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir performs with orchestras and smaller ensembles all around the globe and teaches at the University of Washington in Seattle. But *Vernacular*, her new CD on Sono Luminus, affirms her Icelandic roots even as it acknowledges her geographic distance from her native land. Thorsteinsdóttir has lived outside Iceland most of her life, and the four Icelandic composers whose work she performs on this recital have likewise lived abroad for extended periods. Hafliði Hallgrímsson's "Solitaire" and Halldór Smárason's "O" both intimate the melancholy of exile. And on Þuríður Jónsdóttir's "48 Images of the Moon," she combines nocturnal field recordings made in a fjord with very quiet articulations of extended string techniques, which together evoke the natural sonic environment of rural Iceland. She bows the suite's opening passages so quietly that the cello's sound is dwarfed by the vast silences surrounding it; you get an idea of how small a human might feel gaz-

ing inland at Iceland's glacier-covered landscapes or outward across the North Atlantic. And the way Thorsteinsdóttir makes bowed patterns seem to split and separate on Páll Ragnar Pálsson's "Afterquake" brings to mind the seismic activity that rattles the country. The cellist will perform the album's four pieces at this solo concert. —LEOR GALIL

TOMMY WRIGHT III *Slim Guerilla and Vile Secretion* open. 7:30 PM, *Subterranean*, 2011 W. North, \$20. 17+

Polite but excruciatingly thorough Canadian music interviewer Nardwuar likes to bring his subjects gifts inspired by obscure details of their lives. During his September 2018 interview with Miami MC Denzel Curry, the rapper got so flummoxed by the hyperspecific questions that he asked if Nardwuar was with the feds—but when Nardwuar handed him a cassette copy of *Genesis*, a 2000 greatest-hits compilation by Memphis rapper Tommy Wright III, his reaction was pure excitement. In the 90s, Wright released a series of albums that helped shape the city's humid, funky, sometimes sinister gangsta sound, which reached the national stage thanks to the likes of Three 6 Mafia and 8Ball & MJG. He became known for his southern twang, his swinging double-time raps, and his ability to transform raw, lo-fi sounds into loose but smoldering grooves that felt like they could go on forever. Throughout the formative years of this style in the 90s, Memphis rappers and producers relied heavily on cassettes sold through car-stereo shops, which helped the subgenre grow (and helped its creators pay rent and beef up their home-recording setups). But local support couldn't always boost an artist to success outside the scene, and only two of Wright's six albums were released on CD, even while that format was at its peak. According to a recent Red Bull Music Academy profile, in the 2000s Wright became destitute following financial disagreements with distributor Select-O-Hits and a four-year stretch in prison. Though he'd resigned himself to obscurity outside his hometown, Wright's music has been circulated and celebrated in the 2010s by European fans trading rips of obscure rap cassettes, American skateboarders, and YouTube archivists.

Tommy Wright III ALEXIS GROSS

Find more music listings at
chicagoreader.com/soundboard.

His tracks have also become a blueprint for Denzel Curry and practically every other Soundcloud rapper with a taste for raw, mosh-worthy production. Now in his early 40s, Wright is starting to tour outside the Memphis area for the first time, and according to his Facebook page, he aims to post his original tracks to Spotify soon. I can't be the only one hoping that new listeners getting turned on to his music will entice an enterprising label to reissue his entire catalog. —LEOR GALIL

TUESDAY21

L7 See *Pick of the Week*, page 34. *Le Butcherettes* open. 7:30 PM, *Metro*, 3730 N. Clark, \$26.50. 18+

MARY OCHER + YOUR GOVERNMENT
Desert Liminal and Forced Into Femininity open.
 8:30 PM, *Empty Bottle*, 1035 N. Western, \$12. 21+

Getting a handle on the music of avant-pop singer-songwriter Mary Ocher is like volunteering to board a canoe piloted by a blindfolded Sandra Bullock: given who's driving, you're going to enjoy the adventure, but nothing can prepare you for the rocks and dips ahead. Born in Russia, raised in Tel Aviv, and based in Berlin since 2007, Ocher displays an impressive range of influence and technique on her early albums, moving between Lotte Lenya-style avant-garde torch songs and Robyn-style electronica. And while she performed solo for many years, in 2012 Ocher began playing with a two-person percussion juggernaut she dubbed *Your Government*. On their 2016 album, *Mary Ocher + Your Government*, her experimental lyrics and artistic showmanship shine. The drums on "DreamX3" make a startling entrance, kicking Ocher's already forceful presence into high gear. *Your Government*, which has cycled through a number of members, also plays a big role on 2017's *The West Against the People* (on the album it's Brandon Walsh and Mats Folkesson, and the current tour features Folkesson and Theo Taylor). *The West*'s final track, "Wulkanian," is a collaboration between Ocher and fellow avant-garde polymath Felix Kubin that begins with a Father Yod-style announcement and clangs into a collage of tense, crazy, computer-made sounds. The album was released on Klangbad, the label started by electronic-music and Krautrock legend Hans-Joachim Irmler of Faust, and Ocher's music fits right into this canon, balancing artistic abstraction with a knowing eye on social and political mores. —SALEM COLLO-JULIN

WEDNESDAY²²

ROY AYERS Also Thu 5/23, same venue and time.
8 PM, City Winery, 1200 W. Randolph, \$35-\$48. 

The 70s might have been the last time the media treated jazz music as part of the mainstream: Sun Ra appeared on *Saturday Night Live*, John McLaughlin arguably received as much coverage in rock magazines as David Bowie, and major labels A&M and Arista had entire rosters of jazz artists. In the midst of all of this was the jazz-funk subgenre. Though it was much maligned by jazz purists in its heyday, it's become revered by rare-groove DJs too young to have experienced it firsthand. Jazz-funk practitioners such as Herbie Hancock, Lonnie Liston Smith, Eddie Harris, the Crusaders, and Donald Byrd were all just as likely to be heard on soul and rock stations as they were on jazz radio. Los Angeles vibraphonist Roy Ayers also got a piece of the action. During the 60s, Ayers had established a track record playing behind Jack Wilson and Herbie Mann while releasing solo albums on United Artists and Atlantic. But he really came to the fore as a front man when he formed Roy Ayers Ubiquity in 1970, and the group went on to release a series of

classic albums on Polydor, including 1975's *Mystic Voyage* and 1976's *Everybody Loves the Sunshine*. It's fitting that Ayers plays at City Winery as Chicago looks toward summer—the title track from that 1976 album is one of the ultimate odes to warm weather. Following a health scare last month (he was hospitalized in Portland not long before playing the Soul'd Out Music Festival), Ayers is on the mend—and back out on the road. He's remained prolific throughout his career, and thankfully he's still unstoppable now. —JAMES PORTER

CLOUD RAT *Minimum Wage Assassins, Handsome Prick, Scumlord, and Joint Dislocation* open. 7 PM, Reggie's Music Joint, 2105 S. State, \$25. 21+

On Cloud Rat's October compilation *Silk Panic*, vocalist Madison Marshall howls, "Sister wolf eats the throat of the jester / Here to fucking perform." That line might make a fitting mission statement for the Michigan grindcore band, who have been crafting surrealistic political punk-grind for almost a decade—taking the nightmarish lyricism of Pig Destroyer and melding it with the fury born of living in a state that's full of injustice. The band

is not just ferociously articulate; they're also inventive and unafraid to explore a vast number of styles. *Silk Panic* ends with gothic synth-pop jam "Amber Flush," while their other recently released compilation, *Clipped Beaks*, ends with the 18-minute epic "Holding the Picture," from their 2017 split with Tokyo-via-Chicago doom band Disrotted. To complement Disrotted, who are known for their lengthy songs, Cloud Rat eschewed their usual brevities, instead creating a dystopian sci-fi saga about a woman alone in a ruined world. According to a statement the band shared with Invisible Oranges, the piece is heavily influenced by *Voyage of the Acolyte*, the 1975 solo debut by Genesis guitarist Steve Hackett; 70s prog rock may be a surprising inspiration for a grindcore band, but they make it work. Regardless of where and when they're set—be it present-day Detroit or the far future—Cloud Rat's vivid portrayals of scorched earth linger far after their songs end. —ED BLAIR

WEYES BLOOD 8:30 PM, Lincoln Hall, 2424 N. Lincoln, 8:30 PM, sold out. 18+

Singer-songwriter Natalie Mering, who records and performs as Weyes Blood, was nine years old

when *Titanic* hit theaters in December 1997. On Weyes Blood's fourth album, last month's *Titanic Rising* (Sub Pop), she uses the dreamlike, dramatic "Movies" to sing about how film can leave us wanting more from, or disappointed by, our own reality. Mering wields her powerful voice to create an air of serenity, and in combination with the gentle, sumptuous indie rock of *Titanic Rising*, it gives the album a disarming tranquility—listening to it is as immersive as watching a good movie. The music might feel escapist, except that Mering's lyrics confront contemporary anxieties, such as fragmented relationships, global climate change, and the apathy and helplessness we can feel when faced with a crumbling world we can't fix alone. Though she doesn't mince words, her tone encourages listeners to approach these difficult truths with optimism. "I want people to think about the reality of what's going on but also to feel a sense of belonging and hope and purpose," she told Pitchfork in February. Mering knows that if there's any hope for the kind of miraculous Hollywood ending that would save humanity from self-destruction, we'll have to find it together—that way, even if we fail, we'll at least have one another. —LEOR GALIL 



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Jason Aldean, Kane Brown, 9/27, 7:30 PM, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, Tinley Park

Altan 8/7, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 5/17, noon

American Aquarium 8/23, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM, 18+

Matt Andersen 10/17, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM

Bad Religion, Lawrence Arms 8/9, 8 PM, Riviera Theatre

Big Business, Meat Wave 9/8, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM

Blackbear, Elohim, Gashi 6/15, 7:30 PM, Aragon Ballroom

Boris, Uniform 9/17, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM, 18+

Clare Bowen & Friends 8/4, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 5/17, noon

Jeff Bradshaw & Friends featuring Marqueal Jordan 7/22, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 5/17, noon

Marc Broussard 10/26, 8 PM; 10/27, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM

Circles Around The Sun 6/15, 10:30 PM, Concord Music Hall, 17+

Dave 11/15, 7 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM

Disrupt Festival with The Used, Thrice, Circa Survive, Sum 41, Atreyu 7/12, 1:30 PM, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, Tinley Park

Fink 9/28, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM

Kirk Franklin, Koryn Hawthorne 8/6, 7:30 PM, Chicago Theatre

Girl In Red 9/16, 7:30 PM, Lincoln Hall

Head and the Heart 9/13, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre

Michael Henderson 7/17, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 5/17, noon

Jimmy Herring & 5 of 7 9/20, 7:30 PM, Park West

Hiss Golden Messenger 11/9, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM, 18+

Hold Steady 8/23, 9 PM, Empty Bottle, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM, 8/22, 9 PM; 8/24, 9 PM, Thalia Hall, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM, 17+

Horse Meat Disco, Michael Serafini 6/22, 10 PM, Smart Bar

J-E-T-S 8/16, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall 18+

Hayden James 9/27, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM, 17+

Jonas Brothers, Bebe Rexha 9/19-9/20, 7:30 PM, United Center

Kaina 7/14, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+

Kero Kero Bonito 10/17, 7:30 PM, The Vic

Mannequin Pussy, Destroy Boys, Ellis 9/11, 7 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM

Max 8/4, 7 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 5/17, noon

Brian McKnight 9/5, 7 and 9:30 PM; 9/6, 7 and 9:30 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 5/17, noon

Jon McLaughlin, Sawyer 10/20, 4 and 7:30 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 5/17, noon

Melvins, Redd Kross, Shitkid 9/26, 7:30 PM, Metro, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM, 18+

Michael Morley's Never Quartet Project 7/16, 7 PM, International Museum of Surgical

Science, 18+

New Mastersounds 10/17, 9 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+

Noisem, Organ Dealer, Endmember, Rash 6/5, 8:30 PM, Subterranean

Of Monsters and Men 9/13, 7:30 PM, Aragon Ballroom, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM

Angel Olsen, Vagabon 11/14, 7:30 PM, Riviera Theatre, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM, 18+

Peck 10/5, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM, 18+

Paradise Fears 7/25, 8 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM, 18+

DJ Pierre, Traxx, Justin Aulis Long 7/5, 10 PM, Smart Bar

Powder, Kiddo & Sassmouth, Taylor Bratches 6/14, 10 PM, Smart Bar

Emily Jane Powers, Mailboxes, Claude 7/7, 8 PM, Schubas, 18+

Run River North, Terriers 5/17, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+

Jon Snodgrass, Armchair Martian, Walt Hamburger, Tim McIlrath, GB 6/6, 8 PM, GMan Tavern

Tom Speight 10/21, 7:30 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM

Caroline Spence, Jordie Lane 5/19, 8 PM, Schubas, 18+

Squirrel Flower, Tenci 7/10, 8 PM, Schubas

Stolen, Better Love, Long Gone, States & Capitals 6/15, 6 PM, Subterranean

Alison Sudol 9/5, 7:30 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM

Sun Kil Moon 9/14, 8 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 5/17, 9 AM

Together Pangea, Tijuana Panthers, Ultra Q 7/11, 7 PM, Lincoln Hall

Transference Fest day one with Gun Outfit and friends, Mukqs & Sharkula, Hedra Rowan 5/24, 8 PM, Elastic

Transference Fest day two with Ikue Mori and friends, King Vision Ultra (Geng), Bergsonist 5/25, 9 PM, Elastic

Chris Travis 6/23, 6:30 PM, Bottom Lounge

Tuxedo 8/13, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM, 17+

Tycho, Poolside 9/15, 8 PM, Aragon Ballroom, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM, 18+

Vetusta Morla 10/6, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 5/17

Waterboys 9/29, 5 and 8 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 5/17, 9 AM

Dale Watson 8/1, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM

Tyrone Wells 10/16, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 5/17, noon

Zaz 10/10, 7:30 PM, Athenaeum Theatre, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM

UPDATED

Freestyle Forever: Cynthia, Safire, Pure Pleasure, Chase, Mark Milan, Sammy Zone 5/24, 8 PM, Concord Music Hall, Cynthia added

Loma Prieta, Jeromes Dream, Lord Snow 8/1, 6 and 10 PM, Beat Kitchen, Second show added; 10 PM show sold out, 17+

Subdudes 10/19, 8 PM; 10/20, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, Second show added, on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM

Superchunk (acoustic) 6/10, 7:30 and 10 PM, SPACE, Evanston, 10 PM show added (on sale Fri 5/17, 10 AM); 7:30 PM show sold out

UPCOMING Joshua Abrams's Natural Information Society 6/28, 8:30 PM, Constellation, 18+

Oleta Adams 7/25, 8 PM, City Winery

Aesthetic Perfection 10/5, 8 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

Lydia Ainsworth 7/8, 9 PM, Sleeping Village

Ziggy Alberts, Garrett Kato 6/27, 8 PM, Concord Music Hall, 18+

Bedouine 10/5, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+

Adam Ben Ezra 6/22, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston

Derrick Carter 5/31, 10 PM, Smart Bar

Rosanne Cash, Ry Cooder 6/18, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre

Cayucas 7/9, 8 PM, Schubas

Earth, Wind & Fire 7/27-28, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre

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Edward & Graham 6/8, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+

Ludovico Einaudi 6/6, 7:30 PM, Cadillac Palace Theatre

FM-84 6/29, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+

Fontaines D.C., Pottery 9/15, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+

Chris Forsyth & the Broken Mirrors Motel Band 7/13, 9:30 PM, Hideout

Frenship 5/29, 7:30 PM, Thalia Hall

Bill Frisell 9/20, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston

Gauche, Pledge Drive, Primitive Teeth 8/18, 8 PM, Subterranean, 17+

Mary Gauthier 6/6, 8 PM, Szold Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music

Gloria Gaynor 8/9, 7 and 10 PM, City Winery

Glorryhammer, Aether Realm, Scars of Armageddon 6/7, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

I Am, Orthodox, Boundaries, Kharma 6/19, 6:30 PM, Subterranean

Imelda Marcos, Big Syn, Not For You 6/20, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

Indigenous featuring Mato Nanji 8/14, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston

Lucette, Long Lost 6/20, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+

Luluc 6/12, 8 PM, Schubas, 18+

Luna 10/12, 8 PM; 10/13, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall

Crys Matthews, Heather Mae 6/12, 7:30 PM, SPACE, Evanston

Skeletonwitch, Soft Kill 6/1, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+

Swearin', Mike Krol 8/15, 6:30 PM, Lincoln Hall

Tillers 6/20, 8:30 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn

Touche Amore, P.O.S., True Love 6/20, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+

Twen (DJ set) 6/30, 9 PM, Sleeping Village

ViVii 10/4, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+

Faye Webster 6/19, 8 PM, Schubas, 18+

Weeks 7/26, 8:30 PM, Schubas, 18+

White Fence 10/8, 9 PM, Sleeping Village

Yo La Tengo 6/24, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston

Yungblud 7/13, 8:30 PM, Lincoln Hall

Zimmermen, Cathy Richardson 5/24, 9 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn

Zveri 5/31, 7 PM, Concord Music Hall, 17+



GOSSIP WOLF

A furry ear to the ground of the local music scene

SINGER AND GUITARIST Sophie Brochu has been a mainstay in the Chicago shoegaze scene for nearly a decade, both with the five-piece **Videotape** and in the live lineup of Scott Cortez's long-running **Astrobrite**. In 2017 Brochu debuted her own project, the introspective **Fauvely**, with the excellent *Watch Me Overcomplicate This*, and on Friday, May 17, she releases her best work yet—the EP ***This Is What the Living Do*** (via local label **Diversi**). Lead single “What the Living Do” is perfect dream pop, echoing cavernously but maintaining an intimate feel—it recalls the hushed grandeur of classic Mazzy Star, and seems destined to soundtrack a movie breakup scene or two. Fauvely (which includes Cortez on bass) celebrate with a free show at the **Empty Bottle** on Monday, May 20, and play again at **Sleeping Village** on Sunday, May 26.

Chicago DJ **Andrew Joseph** launched **Leisure Records** last summer with a smooth boogie 12-inch by the DJ and production duo he's part of, **Paid Time Off**. This week its second release arrives, the moody EP ***Slow Down*** by Italian disco duo **Abstract Matters**. On Friday, May 17, Joseph opens for Abstract Matters at a free release party at **Gramophone Records**; the Italians also perform Saturday, May 18, at **Sleeping Village**.

Chicago last heard from **Richard “Epic” Wallace** of BBU in 2014, when he dropped his solo debut, **#OPRAH**. Last week he finally followed up with ***Pot Liquor***, under the name **Unkl Epic**; this wolf particularly digs the ecstatic boom-bap and posi agit-prop rhymes of “Fight Back.”

Last fall, baritone guitarist **Matt Clark** (also of **White/Light**) rejoined **Pinebender**, reuniting the band's original lineup after 16 years. Clark has also been working on his own material, and on Friday he self-released his solo debut, the instrumental album ***Impossible Lows***; the track “Wastyn'd” creates cosmic bliss from psychedelic squeals and thrumming guitar raga. —J.R. NELSON AND LEOR GALIL

Got a tip? Tweet @Gossip_Wolf or e-mail gossipwolf@chicagoreader.com.

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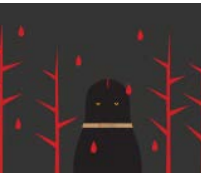


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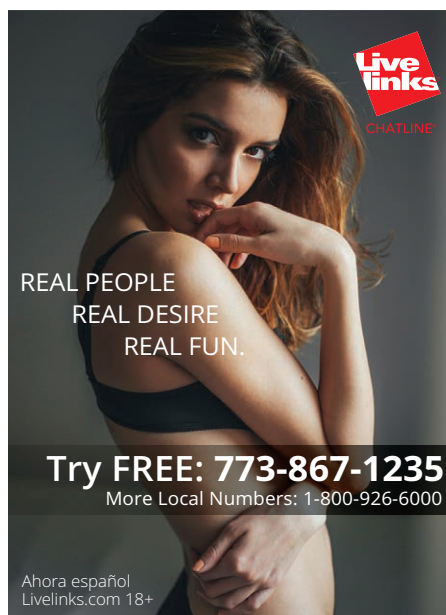
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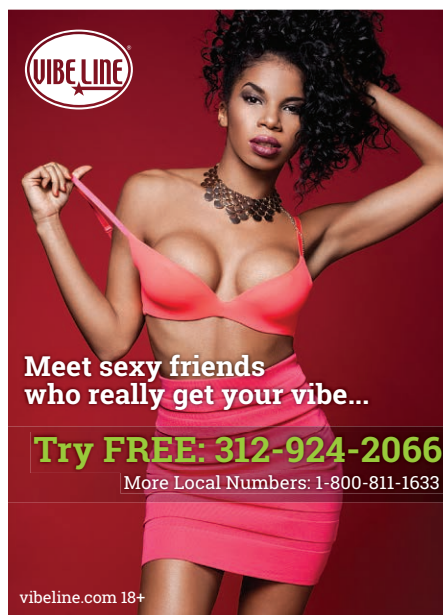
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OPINION

SAVAGE LOVE

If you take off your clothes, you must disclose

Advice on coming clean about herpes

By **DAN SAVAGE**

Q: Garbage human here. I've had herpes for about 15 years. The first five years, I was in a relationship with a guy who also had it. The last ten years, I haven't been in a serious relationship. I've been a (rare, drunk) one-night-stand type of gal, and I don't usually tell the guy because, like, everyone has herpes. (I get that one in five isn't everyone, but if you count HSV-1? I've seen numbers as high as 80 percent.) Frankly, it seems about as significant medically as minimally contagious mild acne. (Some risks to pregnancies and immunosuppressed people exist, and I know logically it's not my call to determine what may be serious for someone else.) I justify nondisclosure to myself these ways, even though I know it's not ethical. On the occasions where I have disclosed, I've been made to feel like a leper by dudes who ten minutes before were begging me not to have to use a condom. I obviously have a lot of resentment over having this stupid thing and over the guilt I have around nondisclosure, and I suspect my history of casual sex is influenced by not wanting to deal with this conversation. Which brings us to now. What I thought was a one-night stand has turned into a months-long affair, and I'm amazed to report I find myself liking and respecting this guy. (I know, I know: If I really respected him, I'd have told him before

I ever knew I respected him.) What do I do? I have to tell him. But how? Is there any justification for what I've done? Can I just say, "Oh man, I noticed a thing and went and got tested and guess what?" That just adds to the lie. There's no way I can have a relationship with this guy based on trust going forward, is there? I've fucked this up and I have to bail, don't I? Am I going to be alone for the rest of my life?
—**DESERVES TO BE ALONE**

A: You're not a garbage human, DTBA. You didn't share something you should've—the fact that you, like upwards of 50 percent of everyone, have herpes—but weren't obligated to. The problem with not disclosing, as you now know, is that casual sex partners have a way of becoming potential long-term partners. And by the time you recognize someone's long-term potential, the stakes are so high that bailing looks like an easier option.

"We don't think DTBA needs to bail," Momo and Felix wrote in a joint e-mail after reading your letter. "And we don't think she's destined to be alone for the rest of her life."

Momo and Felix are the cocreators of My Boyfriend Has Herpes, an Instagram account that has amassed more than 15,000 followers in just a few months. Using simple, direct prose and Momo's charming illustrations, Momo and Felix educate others

about herpes while sharing the story of their relationship—from how they met, to Felix's disclosure, to Momo's initial hesitation to get involved with someone who has herpes.

"Our stance is pro-disclosure, always, but we know this isn't possible for everyone living with HSV," said Momo and Felix. "Unfortunately, one of the significant pitfalls of [not disclosing early on] is the difficulty it adds to the potential of a long-term relationship. And while we don't agree with DTBA's choice to not disclose to her partners, we understand why she might have made those choices. The stigma against herpes is terrible."

Momo and Felix both feel—and I'm with them—that you need to be completely honest with this guy, even if it means the relationship could end. But it might not end, DTBA. He might have a disclosure of his own to make—he could have herpes, too—or the relationship could end for other reasons. You've been dating this guy for only a few months, and he could decide to end things for reasons that have nothing to do with the disclosure you're about to make and/or your failure to make it sooner. Or you might learn something about him down the road that's a deal breaker. (Have you searched his place for MAGA hats?)

So how do you broach this topic?

"She obviously cares about this person," wrote



please recycle this paper

OPINION

Momo and Felix. “She made a mistake and she wants to make it right. DTBA needs to acknowledge her actions (opting for nondisclosure) and their impact (putting her partner at risk without his informed consent). DTBA’s partner may very likely feel betrayed or deceived. He might want to end the relationship, and his feelings would be valid. Unfortunately, all that DTBA can do is acknowledge her mistake, make herself vulnerable, and accept his reaction.”

“But whatever happens, she doesn’t deserve to be alone,” they said. “We all make mistakes, and we all have the opportunity to do better.”

Q: I’m a 24-year-old bisexual female, and the new person I’m dating just disclosed their HSV-2 status. I really like them and was all set to get intimate with them. But their disclosure made me change my mind. They are understanding but sad. But I feel terrible about it! They did the right, honest thing, and now they’re getting punished for it. Herpes isn’t dangerous, it’s usually not even symptomatic, and the social stigma (the chances of someone like ME saying no) is the worst part. I get all that, intellectually. And I’d still rather . . . just . . . not take the risk of becoming someone who has to have

a slightly harder dating life, because of the stress of disclosing to judgmental people like myself. Have I perpetuated the stigma of having herpes because I’m scared of ending up in the “life is harder now” group?
—HELP A RELUCTANT MISS

A: I shared your letter with Momo and Felix, HARM, and they wanted to respond to you individually. But first a quick download: Herpes is caused by two different viruses: HSV-1 and HSV-2. HSV-1 is commonly called “oral herpes” and HSV-2 is called “genital herpes,” even though both are transmitted in similar ways—vaginal, anal, and oral sex, as well as simple skin-to-skin contact—and both can cause sores on the mouth or genitals. Herpes is incredibly common: Some studies have found that more than two out of every three people have herpes. But most people who have herpes don’t know they do—which means that you could already have herpes yourself, HARM.

“It’s HARM’s right to choose not to sleep with anyone for any reason,” said Momo. “But I do think that she’s perpetuating the stigma by rejecting someone just because they have HSV. I totally understand her concerns, and I had the same concerns before deciding to be intimate with Felix. But

after doing my research and contemplating, I decided that I’d rather contract HSV than feed into the stigma. I don’t expect everyone to share the same feelings as me, but that was my choice. Plus, if she walks away from this person and keeps on dating, there’s a very good chance that a future partner might have HSV and not know it. So really, is she taking less risk by not dating them?”

“Like Momo said, everyone has the right to choose who they do or don’t sleep with, regardless of their reasons,” said Felix. “Is HARM perpetuating the stigma against HSV? A bit. But I think her feelings are super-understandable. It’s important for people to educate themselves and take action toward dismantling the stigma, but to potentially take on the burden of living with the stigma is a huge leap. I don’t know if being concerned about becoming a victim of the stigma is the same as perpetuating it. But while HARM fears that contracting HSV will limit her dating life in the future, if she walks away from a relationship with potential, then her feelings have already limited her dating life.” **A**

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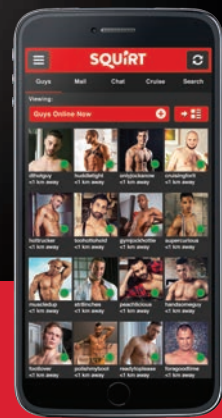
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Oil-Dri Corp of America seeks VP Sales North America and Intl & General Manager in Chicago to develop business plans and strategies for multiple product line markets that ensure attainment of company intl sales goals and profitability. 10 yrs exp in job offered or a related role in a global manufacturing and sales organization setting required. Must have (1) Exp with CPG and Mining & Manufacturing businesses in international markets; (2) Advanced computer and technical skills to navigate the communication barriers of frequent international travel; (3) Proven ability to hire, build, lead and successful sales teams; and (4) Ability and experience to engage in business relationships in diverse cultures. Extensive domestic and intl travel. Approx 90%. Telecommuting permitted. Please apply online at <https://www.oildri.com/careers/apply/>. Refer to Rq. #38.

TransUnion, LLC seeks Data Engineers for Chicago, IL Location to enable new sw application features & optimize strategic analytics sw platforms. Master's in Comp. Sci./Comp. Eng. or Info./Instrumentation Tech. or related field + 2yrs exp. or Bachelor's in Comp. Sci./Comp. Eng. or Info./Instrumentation Tech. or related field + 5yrs exp. req'd. Req'd skills: sw development exp. w/SQL, relational & nonrelational databases, query optimization, data modeling; data integration (AbInitio); SQL, PL-SQL, Autosys, Control M, Oracle, DB2, Agile Scrum Methodology, Linux environment (shell scripting, system administration), Unix scripting; Agile Scrum delivery methods; CI/CD environments, big data (Hive, Spark). 20% telecommuting permitted. Send resume to: R. Harvey, REF: SK, 555 W Adams, Chicago, IL 60661

TransUnion, LLC seeks Lead Developers for Chicago, IL location to design, develop, implement, maintain software applications & IT infrastructure. Master's in Comp. Sci. + 4yrs exp. or Bachelor's in Comp. Sci. + 7yrs exp. req'd. Req'd Skills: software development exp.w/Core Java, J2EE, Spring, Hibernate, JSP, EJB, Servlets, Struts, JQuery, Ajax, JDBC, RMI, Junit, Agile, Web Sphere Application Server, Web Logic, SOAP, RESTful, WSDL, UDDI, Business Delegate, Data Transfer Object, DAO, Façade, Factory methods, Service Locator, CVS, VSS, Serena Dimensions, JSON, XML, Maven, Jenkins, Confluence, DevOps, Angular (js), Splunk, Spring, Boot, Micro Services, CI/CD, Git. Send resume to: R. Harvey, REF: RKR, 555 W Adams, Chicago, IL 60661

TransUnion, LLC seeks Lead Engineers for Chicago, IL location to design, implement & support software infrastructure for servers. Master's in Comp Sci/Comp Eng/any Eng. field + 2yrs exp. or Master's in any field + 3yrs exp. or Bachelor's in Comp Sci/Comp Eng/any Eng. field + 5yrs exp. or Bachelor's in any field + 6yrs exp. req'd. Req'd skills: VMware, x86 server (Cisco UCS, Dell converged); Windows, MS server technologies, PowerShell, Powercli, Cisco PowerTool scripting, Hyper-Converged infrastructure, data center migration & infrastructure upgrades, automation; technical design, implementation, performance & capacity planning/management; availability, performance & scalability of systems; performing Root cause analysis; analytical & problem solving for large computer environment transformation projects. 40% telecommuting permitted. Send resume to: R. Harvey, REF: SNPSJ, 555 W Adams, Chicago, IL 60661

TransUnion, LLC seeks Developers for Chicago, IL location to design & develop sw applications. Master's in Comp. Sci. or Comp./Software Eng. or Software Sci. or Comp. Applications or Info. Systems/Info. Tech. or related field + 2yrs exp. or Bachelor's in Comp. Sci. or Comp./Software Eng. or Software Sci. or Comp. Applications or Info. Systems/Info. Tech. or related field + 5yrs exp. req'd. Req'd skills: Ab initio, BRE, Express>IT/ACE development, Ab initio as Web service, JSON, XML, Agile, CI/CD, Kafka, Apache Spark, Scala, Python, Oracle, Unix/Linux, shell scripting, SQL Developer, AWS (EC2, Lambda, S3, CloudFormation, EBS). 20% telecommuting permitted. Send resume to: R. Harvey, REF: GD, 555 W Adams, Chicago, IL 60661

The Northern Trust Co. is seeking a Consultant, Applications in Chicago, IL, with the following requirements: Bachelor's degree in Computer Science or a related field and 5 years related experience. Prior experience must include the following: utilize EPM tools and best practices including EPMA to design and build data modeling concepts (5 yrs); perform Essbase data load and scripting (2 yrs); build and maintain calc scripts, batch jobs, and automation (5 yrs); create budgeting, forecasting and reporting in Financial Reporting Studio and Smart View (5 yrs). Apply on-line at www.northerntrustcareers.com and search for Req. # 19031 (5/16)

IT Project Manager, Chicago, IL. Need measurable exp in Cadence ORCAD, Cadence Allegro, Downstream, BluePrint and CAM350. Employer req a Bach deg or frgn equiv in CS, Engg, or related field with at least 5 yrs of exp in this or a related position. May req

travel/relocation to client sites. Send resumes to SunPower Consulting LLC, 3410 W. VanBuren Rd, Ste. A, Chicago, IL 60624 (5/16)

REAL ESTATE RENTALS

721 W. Melrose For Sale by owner. 4-unit graystone in Lakeview. \$1,785,000. Search address on YouTube for photos, description. Buyers only, no agents: (773) 636-2021. (5/16)

1BEDROOM
Elegant one bedroom garden apartment. 595 W Rogers Park. All hardwood floors. Across warren park. Heat included, laundry facility; no smoking, no pets. 773.943.9117 (5/16)

MARKETPLACE GENERAL

847 State Route 47, Sugar Grove, IL. Shop away at one of the largest, most well organized church garage sales in the Northwest Suburbs! We fill our entire full court gym, large classrooms, and foyer. Clothes are all hung, sized, and sell for 50 cents each. Saturday from 2-7pm clothes are \$1/ bag and everything else is half price. (5/16)

PERSONALS

Dominik D & Tracy Guns, was at video shoot/hot pencils with kitten, Kitty & Cherry, Chrissy No. Brittney Beach, Lia Lakely with photos with Guns N. Roses, Aerosmith, & M. Crew. Love, Hollywood Rose 312-206-0867 (5/16)

The Christ (AKA: Maitreya Buddha, the Mahdi, Krishna, tc) will soon speak to everyone; He is inspiring people to ee the need for major world changes, so that everyone can have a great life. www.Share-International.org (5/16)

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County. Registration Number: Y19000782 on March 8, 2019 Under the Assumed Business Name of SKY ENTERTAINMENT with the business located at: 4108 N. KENMORE #1S, CHICAGO, IL 60613 The true and real full name(s) and residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is: NOAH HELFAND 4108 N. KENMORE #1S CHICAGO, IL

60613, USA (5/16)

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County. Registration Number: Y19001101 on April 15, 2019 Under the Assumed Business Name of STR8GARBAGE with the business located at: 2625 W CORTLAND, CHICAGO, IL 60647. The true and real full name(s) and residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is: ALEXANDRA RODRIGUEZ 1634 W GREENLEAF CHICAGO, IL 60626, USA LANCE ALLEN 2625 W CORTLAND CHICAGO, IL 60647, USA (5/16)

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County. Registration Number: Y19001165 on April 25, 2019 Under the Assumed Business Name of LOPEZ WINDOWS with the business located at: 2310 W. ARTHUR AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60645 The true and real full name(s) and residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is: MARIO LOPEZ CABRERA 2310 W. ARTHUR AVE CHICAGO, IL 60645, USA (5/16)

THE MOORISH DIVINE AND NATIONAL MOVEMENT OF THE WORLD, LEGAL NOTICE! NAME DECLARATION, CORRECTION PROCLAMATION AND PUBLICATION I, Zakarrhea' Lisa Newbern Mazzarri Bey, being duly Affirmed, standing squarely, Declare, and Proclaim, upon Divine Law; Nature's Law, Universal Law, Moorish Birthrights; International Law; and Constitutional Law; Declare and say: I, being previously Identified by the United States Society of North America - U.S.A. under the colorable, Ward-ship name, Lisa Newbern Mazzarri, do hereby refute the Fraud; make Public and Publish my Corrected National Name; Declare and Affirm my true, "Proper Person Status"; and reclaim my Rightful Social and Cultural Life of the State, in accord with my Moorish Nation of Northwest Amexem / North America - acknowledging my Birthrights. Having Lawfully and Legally Obtained and Proclaimed my Moorish Nationality and Birthright 'Name and Title'; in harmony with, in association with, and in Accord with Divine Law, the Customs; and the Laws, Rules, and Usages of The Moorish Divine and National Movement; being Aboriginal and Indigenous, and bound to the North American Continent by Heritage, by Primogeniture; by Birthright; by Natural Birth; by Freehold; and by Inheritance.

Declared for the Public Record, I am returning the European cognomen and fictitious misnomer back to the Colonial possessors of its pedigree. I am now Rightfully Declaring, Publishing, and Proclaiming my own Free National Name; Affirming my Actual, Rightful, and Civil 'In Full Life' Status; Conjoined to my Moorish American Consanguine Pedigree and National Honor. Let it be Declared, Known, Published, and Resolved that I Am: Zakarrhea' Lisa Newbern Mazzarri Bey, 'In Propria Persona Sui Juris' (being in my own proper person), by birthright; an Inheritance WITHOUT THE FOREIGN, IMPOSED COLOR-OF-LAW, OR ASSUMED DUE PROCESS of the Union States Society; pursuant to, but not limited to: 1. FREE MOORISH-AMERICAN ZODIAC CONSTITUTION: (Zodiac Constitution and Birthrights of the Moorish Americans) being Ali, Bey, El, Dey and Al), Article two (2), Paragraph two (2). 2. UNITED STATES REPUBLIC: DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE: Moorish American Credentials: AA 222141- TRUTH A-1 3. UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT: SUPREME LAW - Acts of State 4. UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION: Article III (3), Section two (2), Amendment V (5) (Liberty clause) and Amendment IX (9) (Reservation of the Rights of the People). 5. RESOLUTION NUMBER SEVENTY-FIVE (75): Dated April 17, 1933 A.D. (MOORISH-AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA AND THE USE OF THEIR NAMES), 6. UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS - UNITED NATIONS - HUMAN RIGHTS [Article Fifteen (15)]. 7. RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES - UNITED NATIONS: GENERAL ASSEMBLY - Part 1, Article 4. 8. I attest to Autochthonous AmErikan Moor the aboriginal and Indigenous Natural People and True Heirs of the Land-Al Moroc (America). Affirming Primogeniture, hereditary, birthright, and Freehold Status Northwest Amexem/Northwest Africa/ North America Wherefore, I, Zakarrhea' Lisa Newbern Mazzarri Bey, being 'Part and Parcel' named herein, and by Birthright, Primogeniture, and Inheritance, make a Lawful and Legal Entry of Affidavit and Public Notification of Nationality Proclamation; Name Correction Claim; Declaration, Affirmation, and Application; Herewith Published for the Public Record. I Am alacas Ley A Free and Sovereign Moorish American National, In Propria Persona Sui Juris

Northwest Amexem / Northwest Africa/North America All Rights Reserved Witness: A Free and Sovereign Moorish American National, In Propria Persona Sui Juris Northwest Amexem / Northwest Africa/ North America All Rights Reserved Witness: A Free and Sovereign Moorish American National, In Propria Persona Sui Juris Northwest Amexem

/ Northwest Africa/North America All Rights Reserved LN/NCT No. 0001H (5/16)

Notice is hereby given, Pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct of transaction of Business and in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County. Registration Number Y19001232 on May 1, 2019. Under the Assumed Business Name of Fye Girl Sunnies with the business located at: 11544 S Aberdeen street, Chicago IL, 60643. The True and real full name(s) and the residence address of the owner(s)/ partner(s) is: Kashara Thigpen 11544 S Aberdeen Street Chicago IL, 60643. (5/23)

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County. Registration Number: Y19001252 on May 1, 2019 Under the Assumed Business Name of SOUTHSIDE CHICAGO TCG with the business located at: 5117 S KIMBARK AVE APT 2, CHICAGO, IL 60615. The true and real full name(s) and residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is: EDWARD J KRYSTOSEK, JR. Complete Address: 5117 S KIMBARK AVE APT 2 CHICAGO, IL 60615,

USA (5/30)

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct of transaction of Business in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County. Registration Number: Y19001260 on May 1, 2019 Under the Assumed Business Name of BB + IDA with the business located at: 1437 Gunderson Ave, Berwyn, IL 60402. The true and real full name(s) and residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is: Owner/Partner Full Name: Jessica Ventura. Complete address: 1437 Gunderson Ave., Berwyn, IL 60402, USA (5/30)

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5PM-FREE
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THE HOYLE BROTHERS
XIU XIU
ONO • RADIANT DEVICES
HOSTED BY GLITTER CREEPS

MON
5/20

FREE
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FRI
5/17

@ GARFIELD PARK CONSERVATORY (300 N. CENTRAL PARK AVE)
DRAB MAJESTY • FACS
CHAMPAGNE MIRRORS • CURT OREN
DJ BUD SWEET
6:30PM

TUE
5/21

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5/22: GREG WARD • BEN LAMAR GAY, 5/23: ESTER, 5/24: CHASMS • DEVON CHURCH, 5/25: *MIRRORED SERIES* (6PM-FREE), 5/25: WINDY CITY SOUL CLUB, 5/26: *STEVIE NICKS BIRTHDAY BASH* (11AM-FREE), 5/26: CHURCH OF MISERY, 5/27: THE SUEVES (FREE), 5/28: CALEB WILLITZ, 5/29: *WONDER & SKEPTICISM* (6PM-FREE), 5/29: GREG ASHLEY, 5/30: FELIX KUBIN, 5/31-6/2 @ DIVISION & DAMEN: *DO DIVISION STREET FEST*, 6/1: MIKAL CRONIN, 6/2: THE GOD AWFUL SMALL AFFAIRS, 6/3: TEEN DAZE (FREE), 6/4: U.S. GIRLS, 6/5: DAWN RAY'D, 6/6: CHOIR BOY, 6/7: MINI MANSIONS, 6/8: ACQUAINTANCES (RECORD RELEASE), 6/9: JESSE MARCHANT • PINE LOUDS
NEW ON SALE: 6/15: *THE BROWN SKIN LADY SHOW* FEAT. DREA THE VIBE DEALER, 6/21: *DIVINO NIÑO* (RECORD RELEASE), 6/27: TEDDY & THE ROUGH RIDERS, 7/4: JOHN MAUS, 7/26: BANDITOS, 8/23: THE HOLD STEADY, 9/8: BIG BUSINESS • MEAT WAVE, 10/15: B BOYS

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SONGS OF THE VAGABOND CELLO

5.30 **ELVIN BISHOP'S BIG FUN TRIO**

5.31 **MASON JENNINGS**
WITH SPECIAL GUEST RHYAN SINCLAIR

6.2 **MORGAN JAMES**

6.3 **AL STEWART**
FULL BAND GREATEST HITS SHOW

6.6 **CORKY SIEGEL'S CHAMBER
BLUES, LYNNE JORDAN &
TORONZO CANNON**

6.9 **CARRIE NEWCOMER**

6.20 **THE JAMES HUNTER SIX**

6.21 **AL DI MEOLA**

UPCOMING SHOWS

5.17 **SARA EVANS & THE BARKER
FAMILY BAND**

5.25 **BIG BAD VODOO DADDY**

5.29 **BAD ON PAPER PODCAST**

6.5 **SONGS & STORIES** WITH ART
ALEXAKIS OF EVERCLEAR, CHRIS
COLLINGWOOD OF FOUNTAINS
OF WAYNE, MAX COLLINS OF EVE
6, JOHN WOZNIAK OF MARCY
PLAYGROUND

6.7 **RAHEEM DEVAUGHN**

6.10 **CHI-TOWN SINGS - BRITNEY
VS. CHRISTINA**

6.11 **SIRIUS XM THE COFFEEHOUSE TOUR
PRESENTS MATT COSTA, JD & THE
STRAIGHT SHOT, MATT HARTKE**

6.12 **THE GREAT LOVE DEBATE**

6.13 **LINDSAY LOU**

6.14 **JON B.**

6.16 **THE SPILL CANVAS**
BOTTLE OF RED TOUR

6.17 **WE MET AT ACME**
WITH LINDSEY METSELAAR

6.18 **ANNE STEELE & LEVI KREIS**

MAY
19

93.3 XRT



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SINGS THE SONGS OF BOB DYLAN

MAY
20

ICE



JOANNE SHAW TAYLOR

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22
+
23

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24

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